



NAVY NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2015

HOME DEBUT

● THE Royal Navy's third Astute-class submarine HMS Artful arrives in her home base HMNB Clyde for the first time.

See page 13 Picture: CPO(Phot) Tam McDonald



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Off-sale date: September 30 2015
£3.00

Enjoying time in the Caribbean



● RFA Lyme Bay near the Royal Caribbean's Navigator of the Seas



● RFA Lyme Bay off Grand Cayman



● RFA Lyme Bay's Lynx fires its flares off Grand Cayman



● A winching exercise by the Lynx of 815 NAS on RFA Lyme Bay

Pictures: CPO Geordie Wilson,
Lt Max Cosby and
Lt Cdr Rob Kenchington, 815 NAS



ANOTHER day, another island paradise. It's a hard life for the men and women of RFA Lyme Bay.

For while the 3,800 or so passengers on Royal Caribbean's Navigator of the Seas, pictured top left with Lyme Bay, are soaking up the sights of Grand Cayman, the RFA crew are working out how to help them – and more than 52,000 islanders – should natural disaster strike.

The amphibious support ship is on 'hurricane watch' for the next few months, ready to offer assistance to Britain's overseas territories in the region if severe storms hit one of them.

Poised off the Cayman Islands' capital George Town, the ship staged an exercise with authorities designed to show what Lyme Bay can do and iron out any potential problems.

In addition to her crew of nearly 100 RFA sailors, the ship carries 23 Royal Navy sailors, 27 Royal Marines and Royal Engineers in a specialist disaster-relief unit, and 18 soldiers from the Royal Logistics Corps – the latter are responsible for the Mexeflote powered rafts.

These were in action during the exercise as the Lyme Bay team practised disembarking kit from ship to shore.

At the same time, her Lynx helicopter from 815 Naval Air Squadron was flying over the 76 square miles – about twice the size of Bristol – of Grand Cayman, scouting possible landing sites and routes on the ground which could be used to move disaster relief supplies around.

The Mk8 helicopter also brought some colour and brightness to a rather sullen day as she tested her Defensive Aid Suite by pumping out flares, treating passing ships to an impromptu daytime firework display.

The helicopter sent infra-red countermeasures – better known as flares – arcing over waters off Grand Cayman during a training flight for the 180-knot aircraft.

Flares are intended to decoy incoming heat-seeking missiles – fired either by other aircraft, or ground-based threats such as shoulder-launched MANPADS (small hand-held surface-to-air missiles) – drawing them away from the Lynx's engines onto a much hotter target.

"It's incredibly satisfying for the team of air engineers to see that their work has an obvious output – and that they've successfully prepared their aircraft for whatever the Navy demands of her," said pilot Lt Oliver Brooksbank.

A ten-strong team from 815 based at RNAS Yeovil in Somerset are supporting the Lynx of 234 Flight throughout Lyme Bay's six-month deployment to the Caribbean.

The helicopter is being used principally in the fight against trafficking in the region – tracking, chasing and, if necessary, stopping 'go-fast' boats used by drug-runners – but can provide assistance in disaster relief by ferrying equipment and people to hurricane-hit areas.

The crew of Flight Commander Lt Cdr Rob Kenchington, pilot Lt Brooksbank, observer (navigator/weapons specialist) Lt Max Cosby and winchman ERT Dale Ward are also ready to respond to Mayday calls.

"Working on the Lynx is great –

although when the flight is embarked it adds extra challenges which need to be overcome," said 30-year-old Dale, who is also the helicopter's winchman – dangling on the end of a wire when required.

"But I am enjoying building my sea-going experience. It means I have to put my life in the hands of the aircrew on a regular basis when I am hanging from the winch wire; I suppose it's only fair since they put their lives in our hands when we maintain the aircraft."

He's been winched on and off tight spots on Lyme Bay in preparation for any rescue missions – something Lt Cosby says is as challenging as it is rewarding.

"The pilot must remain relaxed yet focused whilst they are hovering the aircraft in a restricted space, such as sitting under the bridge of the ship, and the observer must constantly pass minor corrections to ensure the helicopter remains exactly above the winching spot – a few feet left or right can put the winchman into dangerous territory, not to mention bringing the rotor disc a bit too close to a solid, immovable structure."

"The winchman must put his life fully in our hands as he attaches himself to the wire – I know I would be fairly reluctant to be lowered on to the deck 120 feet above the Atlantic but time and again AET Ward is willing to do it."

The five-day visit to the largest of the Cayman Islands allowed time for the ship's CO Capt Kim Watts to host dignitaries, including Premier Alden McLaughlin and Governor Helen Kilpatrick, who collected a new staff car which Lyme Bay had brought out from the UK.



● Personnel go ashore for an exercise in Grand Turk



● RFA Lyme Bay in Tortola

in the Lymelight



The ship's football team took on Northward Prison on a pitch in the jail's grounds. And more than two dozen personnel volunteered to tidy up the Bridge Foundation Men's Halfway House, removing unwanted vegetation, fixing hurricane shutters and checking air conditioning systems were in order.

The beautification of the site didn't end with clearing rubbish; the sailors, soldiers and marines laid a new path to a pond for the centre's users.

"It's what we do," said Sapper James Bredin. "We don't do much work on the ship – we just get transported. So to come and help out in the community is good."

Beyond physical strength, the team brought a tractor and rock breaker to help with the clearance work and, beyond the warm glow of satisfaction at a job well done, were rewarded with traditional Cayman grub: curry chicken, rice, potato salad and upside-down cake.

RFA Lyme Bay then moved on to the island of Montserrat for a three-day visit.

The ship's Lynx helicopter carried out an aerial survey of the island, taking in the former capital Plymouth, abandoned when a massive volcanic eruption in 1997 buried 80 per cent of the city under 1.4 metres of ash.

The entire southern half of the island was declared an exclusion zone because of the continuing volcanic activity at the Soufrière Hills.

The government of the island was moved to Brades, and a new port and capital are under construction at Little Bay, on the island's northwest coast.

The helicopter flights discovered

three marijuana sites in the exclusion zone and the details were given to the Royal Montserrat Police.

During her visit, the ship's company undertook a number of activities, including a major live exercise to test the ship's and Montserrat's ability to deploy Lyme Bay's equipment ashore, including water distribution.

The simulated exercise was based on a storm which struck the island, damaging water pipes at Killcrankie which hit the supply to the island.

Members of the crew also undertook two community projects, repairing the roof of a house at Davy Hill and a children's playground in Salem Park.

Lyme Bay hosted groups of visitors from the Royal Montserrat Defence Force Cadets and the Red Cross.

The ship's footballers took part in a match at the Blake's field against the local grassroots side.

Governor of Montserrat Elizabeth Carriere said: "We'd love to see Lyme Bay back socially but hope we don't have to call on the ship's outstanding assistance."

The ship then visited the Turks and Caicos Islands, where the Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief (HADR) Troop went ashore for a community outreach project and to demonstrate their capabilities.

During the amphibious landing phase of the exercise, the crew of the Combat Support Boat spotted a fisherman drifting past the ship and out to sea with a broken engine.

Coxswain L/Cpl Adrian Trevenna closed in on the wallowing boat before towing it ashore.

"It was very lucky for the islander

that we were in the area, as I doubt anyone else from ashore would have seen him drifting off," said L/Cpl Trevenna.

"He was clearly happy to see us and he couldn't stop thanking us after we'd towed him ashore."

The rescue was witnessed by Zhivago Jolly, the Turks and Caicos Government Press Officer, who said: "Lyme Bay is the ship to have out here – she can offer so much. I'm impressed."

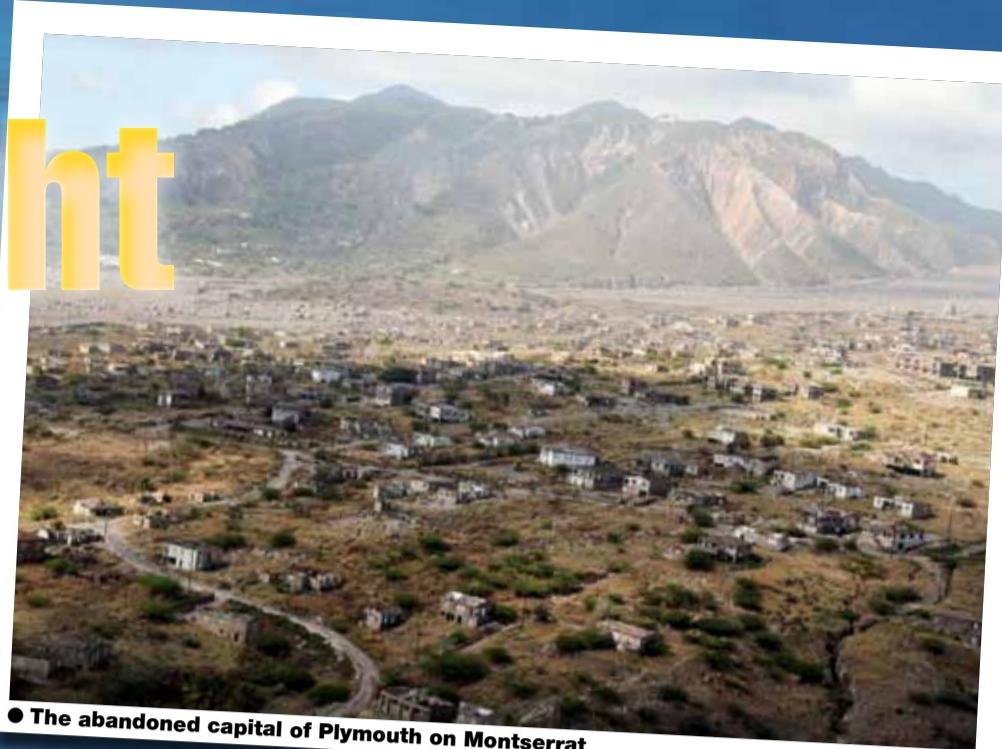
The visit also included an official reception, disaster management meetings and planning exercises, as well as tours for the media and other local organisations.

The ship's Lynx conducted coastal surveys of the island of Providenciales and assisted in searching for illegal charcoal making in the scrubland, which destroys forests.

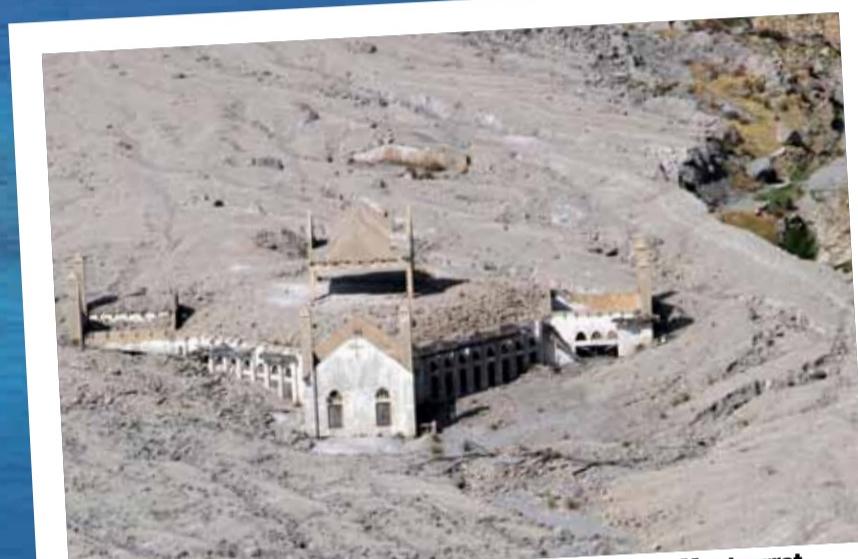
John Claydon, Director of the Department of Environment and Maritime Affairs for the Turks and Caicos Islands Government said: "We found a greater number of well-hidden locations than we expected, and it's down purely to the presence of the Lynx helicopter and their professional crew. They have certainly helped our efforts to cut down on illegal charcoal production."

Lyme Bay then took on a scratch cricket team. Despite being bowled out for an embarrassingly low score, the team still put up a fight when it came to fielding. Lt Cdr Kenchington was making his debut but took two wickets with his first two balls.

Lyme Bay will be in the Caribbean until the end of the year.



● The abandoned capital of Plymouth on Montserrat



● A former church buried by a landslide in Plymouth, Montserrat



● A mud field on Montserrat



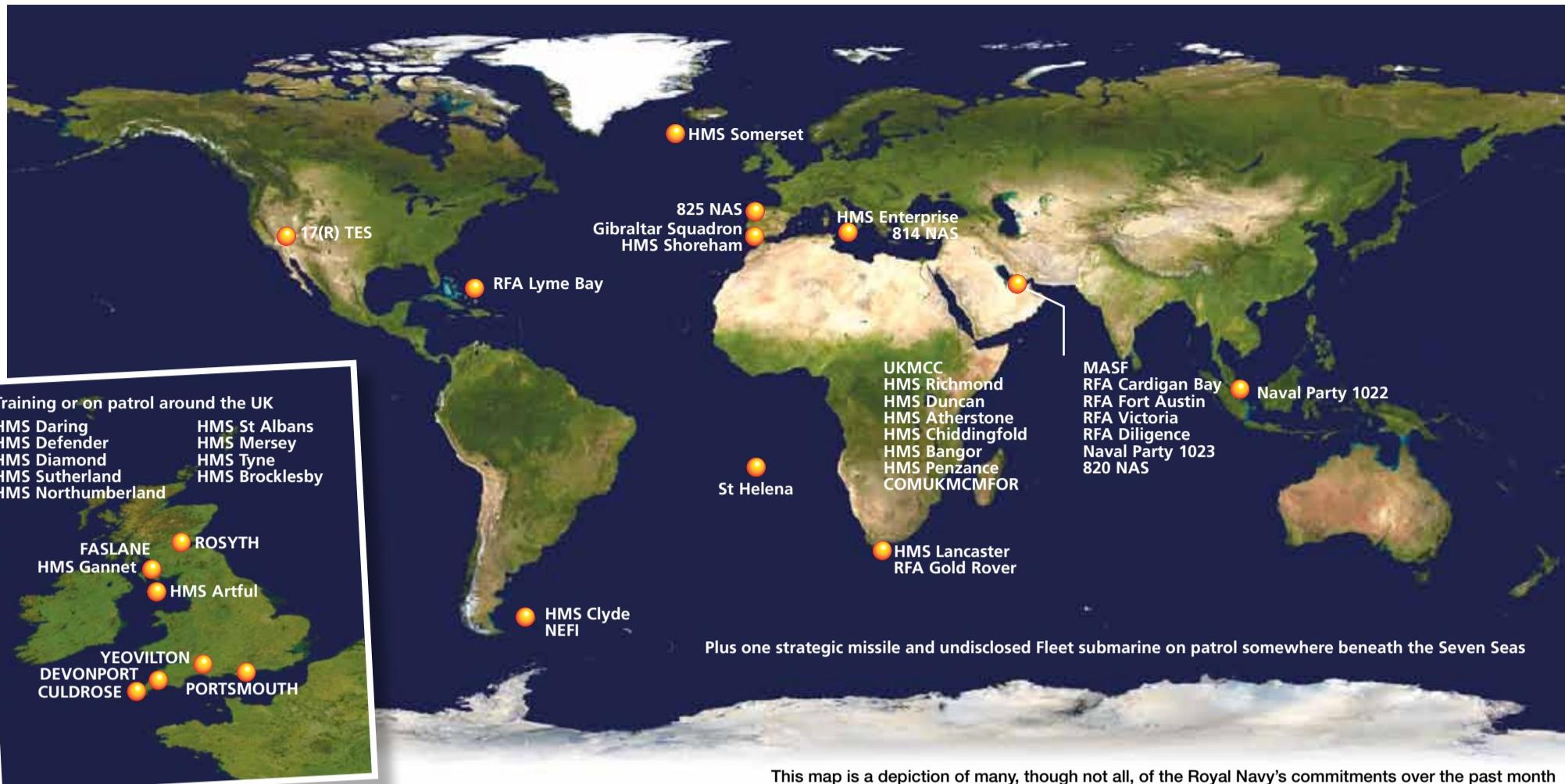
● RFA Lyme Bay's Lynx surveys Montserrat



in the British Virgin Islands



● Lyme Bay's Combat Support vessel helped a stranded fisherman



This map is a depiction of many, though not all, of the Royal Navy's commitments over the past month



FLEET FOCUS

Protecting our nation's interests

A LOOK at the future of the Royal Navy is a key theme of this month's *Navy News*, beginning with the first impression of **HMS Queen Elizabeth** and **Prince of Wales** together in their future home (see page 5).

Work is well under way to prepare facilities in Portsmouth Naval Base to accommodate the biggest warships ever built for the Royal Navy.

The second of the ships, **Prince of Wales**, achieved a major milestone as the largest section of the carrier took to the water for the first time (see page 5) as it was moved from Govan to Rosyth.

Also in Scotland, but this time to HMNB Clyde, where the world's most advanced hunter-killer submarine arrived for the first time (see page 13). **HMS Artful**, the third of the Astute-class submarines, made the journey from Barrow to begin sea trials.

Meanwhile, the project to build the Royal Navy's **Type 26 Global Combat Ship** moved a step forward with the ordering of key equipment (see page 5).

Back to present-day operations and **HMS Bangor** worked with the Egyptian destroyer ENS Al Zaffer – the first joint naval exercise between the two nations in more than three years (see page 6). After completing Exercise Safaga Shark, the Faslane-based minehunter made her way to Bahrain, which will be her home for the next three years.

HMS Lancaster visited remote Tristan da Cunha (see page 11) where her Wildcat helicopter flew in essential stores – a job that would have taken islanders years to deliver.

Sister ship **HMS Richmond** is currently in the Indian Ocean where her Lynx from 815 NAS put on an impressive fireworks display as the aircraft tested its defences (see page 7).

Fellow Type 23 frigate **HMS Somerset** has been working with the Icelandic Coast Guard (see right) during some combined training in the North Atlantic.

It's been a great deal warmer for the crew in **RFA Lyme Bay** as the amphibious support ship remains on 'hurricane watch' in the Caribbean (see pages 2-3).

Also enjoying some warm weather, but this time in Portugal, was **825 NAS** (see pages 14-15) as the squadron took five of its new Wildcats – and a 65-strong engineering and support team – to Ovar for tactical training and a test of 825's logistical chain.

As the **Fleet Air Arm** prepares to bid farewell to the Lynx, 35 years of foreign aviators flying the aircraft has come to an end at **815 NAS** (see page 14). Pilots and observers from eight nations have flown the helicopter as part of long-standing liaison agreements and exchange programmes.

Maintaining the Naval aviation theme, **HMS Mersey** achieved a first as it launched a 3D-printed aircraft (see page 15) as part of an experiment led by scientists from the University of Southampton.

RNAS Culdrose hosted more than 20,000 visitors for its annual air day (see pages 20 and 25), with the Italian Air Force's *Frecce Tricolori* taking top billing with their breathtaking manoeuvres.

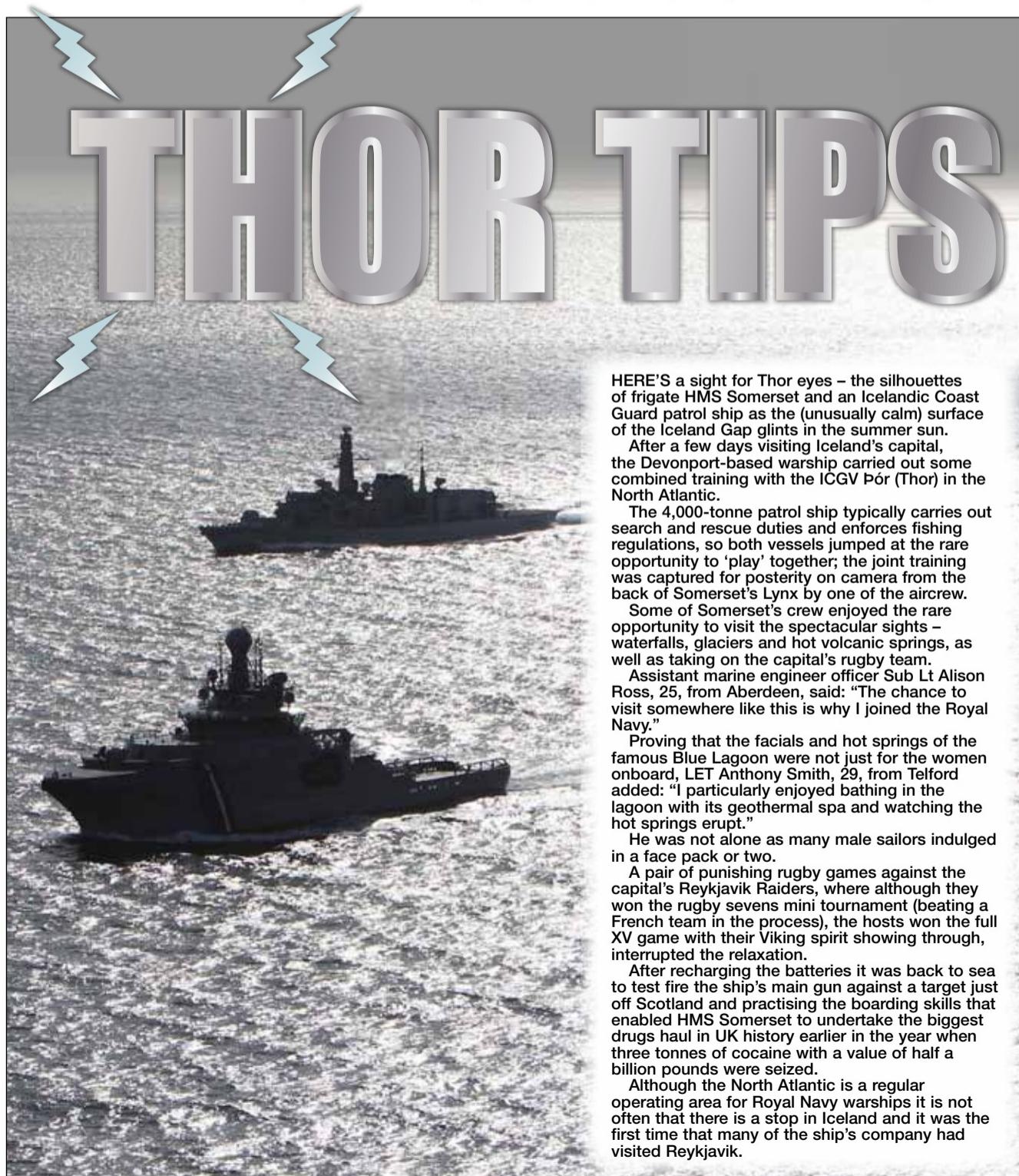
The Royal Navy Historic Flight revealed that the **Sea Fury** which crashed at last year's Culdrose air day is on target to return to the skies in 2016 (see page 9).

Last month saw a number of historic commemorations, the biggest of which, the 70th anniversary of **VJ Day**, was marked in London (see page 19).

The Royal Navy's standard 'flies' once more on the **'Mighty Hood'** after more than 70 years (see page 9). The White Ensign has been placed on the remains of the battle-cruiser, which lies 9,330ft below the surface of the Denmark Strait.

RN divers cleared old ammunition from the wreck of **RFA Darkdale** off St Helena before oil was tapped from the sunken tanker and the Blue Ensign raised on her remains (see page 18).

In Cornwall, **Royal Marines** past and present gathered for the rededication of the grave of L/Cpl William Whitmore, whose identity remained a mystery for nearly 100 years (see page 16).



HERE'S a sight for Thor eyes – the silhouettes of frigate **HMS Somerset** and an Icelandic Coast Guard patrol ship as the (unusually calm) surface of the Iceland Gap glints in the summer sun.

After a few days visiting Iceland's capital, the Devonport-based warship carried out some combined training with the ICGV Pór (Thor) in the North Atlantic.

The 4,000-tonne patrol ship typically carries out search and rescue duties and enforces fishing regulations, so both vessels jumped at the rare opportunity to 'play' together; the joint training was captured for posterity on camera from the back of Somerset's Lynx by one of the aircrew.

Some of Somerset's crew enjoyed the rare opportunity to visit the spectacular sights – waterfalls, glaciers and hot volcanic springs, as well as taking on the capital's rugby team.

Assistant marine engineer officer Sub Lt Alison Ross, 25, from Aberdeen, said: "The chance to visit somewhere like this is why I joined the Royal Navy."

Proving that the facials and hot springs of the famous Blue Lagoon were not just for the women onboard, LET Anthony Smith, 29, from Telford added: "I particularly enjoyed bathing in the lagoon with its geothermal spa and watching the hot springs erupt."

He was not alone as many male sailors indulged in a face pack or two.

A pair of punishing rugby games against the capital's Reykjavik Raiders, where although they won the rugby sevens mini tournament (beating a French team in the process), the hosts won the full XV game with their Viking spirit showing through, interrupted the relaxation.

After recharging the batteries it was back to sea to test fire the ship's main gun against a target just off Scotland and practising the boarding skills that enabled **HMS Somerset** to undertake the biggest drugs haul in UK history earlier in the year when three tonnes of cocaine with a value of half a billion pounds were seized.

Although the North Atlantic is a regular operating area for Royal Navy warships it is not often that there is a stop in Iceland and it was the first time that many of the ship's company had visited Reykjavik.



Divers feel the Wrath

THIS is a 1,000lb 'medium capacity' – general purpose – bomb. And in a few minutes it'll be torn apart in a million pieces courtesy of the charge being laid by a Royal Navy diver.

A team from the Northern Diving Group spent a fortnight at the north-western tip of the British Isles dealing with a rich haul of unexploded bombs.

Each summer the bomb disposal experts from Faslane decamp to the ranges at Cape Wrath to get rid of high explosives peppering the seabed.

The remote range – the nearest village, Durness, is ten miles away, Thurso is 60 miles to the east, Inverness 80 miles to the south – is used extensively by the military, from naval shells raining down from the 4.5in guns of the Fleet to Apache gunships letting rip.

And 350 yards off the cape there's Garvie Island – around 750ft long, 250ft wide at the fattest section. It lies on a north-east/south-west axis and (supposedly) resembles the outline of an aircraft carrier.

As it's positively indestructible, it's been hammered repeatedly by RN and RAF jets down the years as pilots hurled 500 and 1,000lb bombs at it – some practice weapons, some live.

Spotters on shore report the fall of the bombs, so dive teams have a rough idea of where any unexploded ordnance might lie.

Most of the bombs land in a trough between the island and a reef. Those which have been down the shortest time are usually still in good condition – lettering and markings, such as a green and yellow ring (live) or blue (practice bomb) can still be made out.

But bombs which have languished on the seabed longer are often hidden by the dense 'forests' of kelp which makes hunting them down trickier.

The team from Faslane were interested in American-made Mk80s and various 500 and 1,000 pounds dropped by British and NATO forces.

Once located, a diver-placed charge – four pounds of plastic explosive – is fixed on the bombs and a five-minute timer set to give the divers plenty of time to retreat to a safe distance.

F-35 pilots' new vision

THE updated helmet for RN and RAF pilots flying the F-35B Lightning II has been unveiled.

The third-generation Helmet Mounted Display System includes an improved night-vision camera and improved display systems.

Pilots are currently using the second-generation system which allows them to project all the information they need on to the helmet's visor.

The UK programme for the jets, which will fly from the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers, is being led by 17(R) Squadron at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

Rockwell Collins has so far built more than 200 helmets – all of which are bespoke to each pilot (a mould is taken of their heads) and cost around £260,000 (\$400,000) apiece.

Quays to the future

THIS is the first impression of HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales together in their future home.

Work is under way now to prepare facilities in Portsmouth Naval Base to accommodate the biggest warships ever built for the Royal Navy.

It will take 18 months and £34m to turn the 90-year-old structure at Middle Slip Jetty into 21st Century moorings meeting all the needs of Britain's future flagship.

In due course, the more modern Victory Jetty – in the shadow of Nelson's legendary namesake man o'war – will also be improved so that both 65,000-tonne Leviathans can be in port simultaneously.

HMS Queen Elizabeth – currently being fitted out at Rosyth dockyard in Scotland – is due to make her debut in Portsmouth in early 2017.

Around £100m investment in the base and harbour is required to prepare the base for her arrival.

The year and a half of work carried out by construction firm VolkerStevin – who also built the new ammunition facility in Portsmouth Harbour for the six Type 45 destroyers based in the city – will see hundreds of tonnes of steel installed and concrete poured to replace or enhance the existing jetty.

And in December, eight months of dredging begins to deepen the main channel used by shipping by one metre – the carriers will have a draught of 11m (36ft), the same as post-war battleship HMS Vanguard – and treble its width.

The dredgers will have to remove three and a half million cubic metres of mud, sludge and shingle – that would fill the holds of 14 super tankers or most of Wembley Stadium and is the equivalent in weight of more than 50 HMS Queen Elizabeths.

Much of that removal work will focus on the area between



Middle Slip and the ammunition jetty, which will serve as the carriers' turning circle.

"This is a huge project – and a very exciting one, refurbishing and rebuilding jetties, bringing in new power facilities, installing navigation beacons, dredging millions of tonnes of mud," said Capt Iain Greenlees, Head of Infrastructure.

"This programme confirms the future of Portsmouth Naval Base for the next 50 to 80 years. It will be the only base which can fully support HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales and meet all their needs."

Those who've stood on the jetty many times may be surprised to know that the structure isn't solid, but a concrete 'floor' some 80 to 100 centimetres thick sitting on either a complex concrete lattice network (built in the 1920s) or a series of steel supports (from the 1970s). Between them the tide rises and falls.

The changing sea level – it rises and falls up to five metres (16ft) with each tide – limits

work underneath the jetty to six-hour bursts.

And during those six-hour bursts, the construction engineers will have to replace the entire 1920s structure (4,000 cubic metres of concrete) as it's reached the end of its working life; once reinforced with 2,500 cubic metres of concrete (which would fill an Olympic-sized swimming pool), the 1970s section of the jetty will be fine for the Queen Elizabeth class' needs.

In addition to the concrete, new communications cables (1,800 metres – enough to stretch to the top of Wembley Stadium), a high-voltage electrical supply, improved fresh water piping will also be installed.

"The new aircraft carriers will be bigger than anything before – and so everything which services them needs to be bigger as well to meet the demands," said Rob Coupe, managing director of VolkerStevin who have around 75 people working on the project.

"If you think back to the 1920s, many of the stores delivered to

the ship arrived in carts and barrows and was often loaded by hand. And the mooring load of the new ships will be twice as great as what's gone before them. The concrete from the '70s can be refurbished, that from the '20s will have to be demolished."

Because of the width of the sponsons – which carry sections of the carriers' sprawling flight deck – the hull of the ships will actually sit 22 metres (72ft) from the jetty wall so they're clear of the cranes on the jetty; catamarans will bridge the gap between the vessels and the land.

And new brows – gangways for the ship's company and visitors – stretching at least 20 metres (65ft) either to the flight deck lifts on the starboard side or access points on the port will be required.

Also still to come as part of the improvement project are around a dozen navigational aids – those planted in the harbour will be 150ft high – to help the captain, bridge team and pilot to bring the carriers safely alongside.

Iron Men host the Cheeries

THE new crew of HMS Chiddingfold were shown the ropes of operations in the punishing conditions of the Gulf (over 40°C...) by their American counterparts.

The Brits have just taken charge of the Cheery Chid as part of the latest rotation of crews of the four-strong RN minehunting force in the Middle East.

They struck out in company with the USS Gladiator – unofficial motto Wooden Ship-Iron Men – which, like the RN vessels, is based in Bahrain as part of the American mine warfare Task Force 52.

The two warships met mid-Gulf to transfer stores, conduct some joint training and give each other an insight into the way they work...

...which is remarkably similar, for both navies use Seafox, the small remote-controlled submersible, to identify and destroy mines.

Some of Chiddingfold's warfare team were also shown some of the Avenger-class ship's defensive firepower. Gladiator's crew can call upon if required: a couple of 0.5 calibre heavy machine guns, two standard machine guns and a pair of grenade launchers.

Chiddingfold's CO Lt Cdr Tom Trent said he and his shipmates relished the chance to visit Gladiator and "get to the nub of the issue".

He continued: "Although both our Navies use Seafox to search for, classify and destroy mines, our collective pooling of real-world, front-line experience has been invaluable and provided much food for thought for both commanders."

'Land several 4.5in blows

THE first bangs in a good 18 months shook HMS Sutherland from bow to stern.

Not since late 2013 has 88lbs of high explosive shell left the barrel of the frigate's main 4.5in gun.

But after a 13-month revamp in her native Devonport – which effectively doubles the ship's active life, taking her into the early 2030s – the Fighting Clan is slowly coming back to life, flashing up her sensors and weapon systems.

The Kryten – officially the Mk8 Mod 1 4.5in gun – was the latest of those to be tested during the frigate's work up in the South Coast exercise areas.

"This firing has been a great opportunity to prove what one of the ship's primary offensive weapon is capable of," said the gun's maintainer, CPO Gavin Roberts.

His boss, weapon engineer officer Lt Cdr Jon Boughton added: "I'm extremely proud of my team and what they've achieved. This was an important milestone in our regeneration and signals that the Fighting Clan is ready for the next challenge."

Recently rededicated in the presence of friends and family in Devonport Naval Base, Sutherland has a few more trials and tests to carry out ahead of summer leave, then Operational Sea Training – the rigorous assessment all RN vessels go through before they can deploy on front-line duties.



Equipment ordered for Type 26 warships

VITAL components such as engines and gearboxes have been ordered as the project to build the Royal Navy's Type 26 Global Combat Ship moved another step forward.

Although design details for the Type 26 – which will replace the Type 23 frigate – have yet to be finalised, crucial components such as gas turbines, power transmission, navigation and communications systems have been ordered for the first three ships in a tranche of contracts with a total value of more than £170m.

The contracts were awarded to:

■ Babcock for the ship's air weapons handling system;

■ David Brown Gear Systems Ltd for the propulsion gearbox and the test facility;

■ GE Power Conversion for the electric propulsion motor and drive system and testing facility;

■ Raytheon for the integrated navigation and bridge system;

■ Rolls-Royce Power Engineering for the gas turbines;

■ Rohde & Schwarz UK Ltd for the communications systems;

■ WR Davis for the uptakes and downtakes.

Builder BAE Systems also confirmed a subcontract to its Combat Systems team for the Meteorological and Oceanographic

(METOC) system, which collates and analyses environmental information.

This means there are now more than 1,250 people across the UK working on the Royal Navy's next generation warships.

Ordering of long-lead items now means equipment will be delivered to Glasgow at the point it is needed in the ship's manufacturing phase, which is expected to begin next year, according to BAE Systems.

The first Type 26 is expected to enter service early next decade.

These manufacturing contracts are part of the overarching £859m Demonstration Phase contract which began in April 2015.

Block capital (ship)

THE largest section of HMS Prince of Wales has taken to the water for the first time.

The 11,200-ton hull block – known as Lower Block 04 – will contain the hangar, machinery space, missions systems compartments and accommodation.

A 2,000-wheeled platform operated by a single remote-control device was used to move the block out of BAE's cavernous ship hall in Govan.

It was then driven onto a sea-going barge to prepare for its voyage to Rosyth, where the carrier is being assembled.

"The sheer scale and complexity of this hull section is awe-inspiring and a reminder of the incredible skill that exists within our workforce and across the industry," said Mick Ord, managing director of BAE Systems Naval Ships.

"This is a significant moment as we approach the final block construction stages but there is still much more work to be done on this programme as we support the assembly, outfitting,

mission systems integration and trials over the coming years with our partners at Rosyth."

Lower Block 04 is 20 metres (65ft) high, 80 metres (262ft) long – making it around one fifth of the carrier's overall hull and significantly larger than the Type 45 destroyers which were the last vessels to be delivered to the Royal Navy from Glasgow.

The large block was due to make the journey from Glasgow to Rosyth as Navy News went to press.

The final two smaller sections of Prince of Wales from Govan are due to be delivered by the end of the year.

HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales are being constructed in Rosyth by the Aircraft Carrier Alliance, a partnership between the Ministry of Defence, BAE Systems, Thales UK and Babcock.

The Govan yard is also working on the first of three of the RN's next generation patrol ships, HMS Forth.

Picture: BAE Systems



RN escort for classic race

Picture: LA(Phot) Guy Pool, FRPU East



PATROL boat HMS Dasher leads Artemis Racing and Land Rover BAR Great Britain along Portsmouth's historic seafront as the world's most prestigious yacht race comes home after more than 160 years.

Not since the inaugural America's Cup all the way back in 1851 has the race taken place in the Solent.

The waters off Portsmouth played host to the first challenger round leading up to the event proper in Bermuda in 2017.

Five teams are looking to seize the famous trophy from Oracle Team USA who claimed it two years ago.

The catamarans used Portsmouth Naval Base as their 'campaign headquarters' for the four-day event, with Dasher and frigate HMS St Albans escorting the craft into the Solent.

Foul, particularly unseasonal weather, meant only one of the two days of racing took place.

In the first race Sir Ben Ainslie's Land Rover BAR Great Britain beat the Americans. In the second heat, Emirates Team New Zealand crossed the line ahead of the British Olympic yachtsmen's team.

The second day of racing fell victim to strong winds and prevented guests of honour the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge from watching the action.

They left Portsmouth with bath-time gifts for Prince George and Princess Charlotte: wooden replicas of the RN's new carriers HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales, handcrafted by three BAE Systems staff.

"The toys float well, are waterproof, pretty robust and childproof," said Captain of the Base Col Mike Tanner RM who presented the gifts to the royal couple. "Prince William said he looked forward to testing them out in the bath."



That Sphinxing feelin'

THE blue waters of the Red Sea sparkle under the summer sun as HMS Bangor (left) pirouettes with Egyptian destroyer ENS Al Zaffer – the first joint naval exercise between the two nations in more than three years.

The Sandown-class minehunter sailed with the Jianghu I-class destroyer from the home of the Egyptian Red Sea Fleet at Safaga for Exercise Safaga Shark.

The exercise began immediately as the two vessels came under a simulated attack from an Egyptian patrol boat, putting Bangor's force protection team and ship handling to the test as it buzzed the minehunter.

Once clear, HMS Bangor joined Al Zaffer for a series of officer of the watch exercises. With the hosts providing instructions and Bangor acting as the guide ship, the duo formed into line for manoeuvres, with the two ships communicating by radio and flags.

The second exercise saw ENS Al Zaffer report she had a casualty requiring assistance. A small medical team from Bangor arrived by seaboot to support the Egyptian first aiders.

The team, led by Bangor's Executive Officer Lt Mark Morrison, later met their Egyptian counterparts and toured the ship.

"After a busy and successful exercise it was a real pleasure to visit Al Zaffer to see the ship and thank their team personally for the opportunity to train

together," said Lt Morrison.

"They appeared to enjoy it as much as we did and I hope we get to work together again."

The joint exercise – so named as Safaga Naval Base prominently features a shark in their crest – came after HMS Bangor enjoyed back-to-back visits to Egypt.

The ship spent two nights alongside in Alexandria, the first visit by a Royal Navy ship since 2009. Bangor was escorted into port by an Egyptian warship and met by a television crew filming her arrival.

Bangor's CO Lt Cdr Michael Carter Quinn laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in central Alexandria, accompanied by an Egyptian Navy Commodore and guard and band.

He later welcomed Egyptian Naval officers and guests onboard for *Iftar*, the meal eaten at sunset during Ramadan on completion of the daily fast.

Safaga is just past the half-way point between Bangor's home for the bulk of her 15-year-career (Faslane) and her home for the next three years (Bahrain) as she takes over from her sister HMS Shoreham who's on the 7,500-mile journey home to Scotland.

■ There's a new crew taking charge of another of the RN's Gulf minehunters, HMS Atherstone.

Crew 4 from Portsmouth's 2nd Mine Countermeasures Squadron relieved Crew 1 aboard the Hunt-class ship.

The new crew will train and work

closely with other navies, including Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and the USA.

The 45-strong crew will also sail Atherstone back to the UK as the Crazy A completes her three-year tour of the Gulf.

AB(MW) Jordan Muscat, from Portsmouth, who is on his first deployment, said: "After all the training we've had, it's a good feeling to finally get out here and put it all into practice."

Operations and mine clearance diving officer Lt Tom Hazel said: "Since our last deployment, Crew 4 has seen an 80 per cent change in personnel. However, after the training we've had, it is fair to say that we're a well worked-up team and ready to carry out our mission."

His CO Lt Cdr Mark Headley added: "Over the last 18 months, I have seen my crew work tirelessly to provide the best possible service to the Royal Navy, whether it will be on live operations, ceremonial duties or showing the ship to the public. This deployment offers us an excellent opportunity to show what we are capable of."



Duck chuffed with her chaff

THE skies off Portland were filled with strange shapes and glittering objects as HMS Iron Duke tested her ability to trick enemy missiles.

The Portsmouth-based warship spent a week off the Dorset coast as sailors and scientists hurled decoys into the air and on to the water.

The RN's 13 Type 23 frigates can go for the 'hard kill' – shooting down incoming anti-ship missiles such as Exocet or Harpoon with her Seawolf system, which can also destroy enemy aircraft.

But the ship can also go for the 'soft kill', luring the missile away from its intended target using a series of decoys.

Seagnat – which looks like a cluster of half a dozen mortar or torpedo tubes on the upper deck – fires a small missile canister which can contain various objects to trick a missile's 'brain' into thinking it's attacking a 4,500-tonne warship.

It can litter the sky with hundreds of metallic strips to confuse the incoming missile, infra-red rounds (pictured above being launched) to draw in heat-seeking weapons and the Siren Active Decoy, which descends towards the sea under a small parachute, transmitting signals to give the impression it's really a ship.

Whilst the entire frigate flotilla regularly fires Seawolf to prove the effectiveness of the surface-to-air missile, decoy firings are much less frequent, as PO(EW) Alan Hunt explains.

"I've worked with these systems for 18 years, only trained with drill rounds and only got as far as loading the live decoys.

"It's very impressive – and reassuring – to use all the different decoy systems onboard Iron Duke. Hopefully it'll become a far more regular serial in the future."

It's down to the electronic warfare team to both load the decoy launchers on the upper deck and run the systems from the bowels of Iron Duke's operations room.

"It was good to fire this amount of decoys in such a short space of time," said LS(EW) Luke Stott. "It's extremely rare and of great training benefit to me and the loading team."

The scientific arm of the MOD, DSTL, embarked a team on the Iron Duck and, together with scientists at a calibration centre ashore, collected reams of data from the firings to see how well the decoys performed and to prove existing tactics for deploying them.

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Flares for action



ANYTHING a Type 45 and her Lynx can do, so can a Type 23 and her trusty helicopter.

Well, apart from downing enemy aircraft up to 75 miles away with Sea Viper and their pif-paf technology.

Or smashing them to a million pieces at point-blank range with a Phalanx Gatling gun should the incoming foe evade the Vipers.

OK. Anything a Lynx embarked on a Type 45 destroyer can do, it can do from a Type 23 frigate.

Long-standing readers may

remember LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins' award-winning shot of HMS Dragon's Mk8 Lynx spewing (technical term) decoy flares with the ship behind her a couple of years back...

...Well to test the defensive aids suite on their Mk8 assigned to Richmond in the Indian Ocean, Flight Commander Lt Simon Yates and pilot Lt Antony Wells did the same, pumping out a myriad of flares – their helicopter's principal line of defence against heat-seeking missiles.

And they did so with similarly impressive results to Dragon, lighting

up a remarkably-calm ocean as dusk descended east of Suez.

It's a welcome return to action for the 815 Naval Air Squadron Lynx which was (briefly) sidelined on Richmond as the frigate hosted the larger Merlin, switching from hunting smugglers to hunting submarines.

Richmond has spent almost her entire time since arriving in theatre from Portsmouth in the spring conducting counter-smuggling patrols, chiefly against the drugs trade which funds terrorist activity...

...which is exactly what the Merlin

Mk2s of 820 NAS are also doing around the clock in the region.

Both the helicopters and the ship were built to hunt submarines – and returned to basics when they met up for a joint training exercise.

"The interaction with 820 was a useful training opportunity for the sonar and operations room crews," said PO Lindsey Hallam, one of the ship's underwater warfare specialists.

"It was great to make use of a live asset such as the Merlin to test and advance our anti-submarine warfare expertise."

Richmond possesses "some of the most advanced anti-submarine warfare equipment in the world" in the words of her CO Cdr Mark Anderson. "Conducting training in the unique environment of the Indian Ocean allows us to understand that environment better and demonstrate that we can use this capability globally."

His ship is currently enjoying a mid-deployment rest before she resumes counter-terrorism patrols with the international task group CTF150.

Picture: MCS2 Omar Dominique, USN

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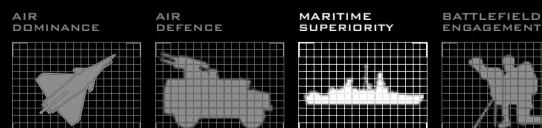


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A mighty tribute

AFTER more than seven decades, the Royal Navy's standard 'flies' once more on the Mighty Hood.

Two thousand eight hundred and forty-eight metres (9,330ft, or a mile and three quarters) below the surface of the Denmark Strait, the White Ensign has been placed on the remains of the battle-cruiser, part of a delicate – and successful – operation to recover the ship's bell and honour the 1,415 men lost when she blew up in 1941.

After an attempt in 2012 was thwarted by the weather, Microsoft founder and philanthropist Paul G Allen returned this summer with a specialist team from Blue Water Recoveries, which found the Hood's wreck back in 2001.

The weather intervened once more – but only to prevent a robot submersible cleaning a memorial plaque left 14 years ago. It did succeed in recovering the 18in-high bell (pictured inset) and 'hoisting' the ensign.

The bell, which was cast for the previous battleship of the same name, will be restored and placed on display at the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth as a lasting memorial to those lost.

The recovery operation was carried out with the full approval of the RN – Hood's wreck is a protected war grave and ordinarily off limits to explorers – and the association which upholds the memory of the ship and all who served in her.

David Mearns, director of Blue Water, said the iconic bell was in surprisingly good condition despite 74 years below,



with inscriptions – such as one by Lady Hood, the widow of Admiral Sir Horace Hood killed at Jutland – still legible.

"This was clearly a special bell for a special ship and it will forever serve as a fitting memorial to the mighty Hood – and a reminder of the service and sacrifice of her men," he said.

I'm extremely pleased that we have been able to fulfil one of the last wishes of Ted Briggs – one of only three survivors of Hood's crew – to recover the bell as a memorial to his shipmates."

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas said Hood had been "a magnificent symbol of the power of the Royal Navy in the inter-war years. 'The Mighty Hood' is one of the greatest fighting ships in our nation's long and glorious maritime history.

"That she was lost with her guns thundering in defence of the convoys that formed Britain's lifeline is a tragic reminder of the high price that our island nation paid for survival, and for the freedom and prosperity we enjoy today."

No ship embodied the Royal Navy more between the two world wars than the battle-cruiser – and no shock was greater to the Royal Navy in WW2 than her loss

in a brief, brutal encounter with Hitler's flagship Bismarck on May 24 1941.

The ship blew up, her magazines detonated by a German shell, and she sank in minutes, taking all but three of her 1,418 crew down with her.

As she sank, the battle-cruiser broke in two and debris, including the bell, was scattered around the sea bed.

The bell was mounted on a high wooden stand, which was kept on the warship's quarterdeck in harbour and typically outside the captain's quarters when at sea. It was sounded by a Royal Marine to mark daily routine and watches on board, but would also be struck in the event of fire or other calamity aboard.

Once restored – the conservation work is likely to take around 12 months – it will be reunited with the bell of HMS Prince of Wales, which took part in the same Denmark Strait action with the Bismarck but survived... only to be sunk at the end of the year by the Japanese in the South China Sea.

"There is no headstone among the flowers for those who perish at sea," said Rear Admiral Philip Wilcock, president of the HMS Hood Association; his uncle went down with the battle-cruiser.

"For the 1,415 officers and men who lost their lives in HMS Hood on 24 May 1941, the recovery of her bell and its subsequent place of honour in the museum will mean that future generations will be able to gaze upon her bell and remember with gratitude and thanks the heroism, courage and personal sacrifice of Hood's ship's company who died in the service of their country."

Skies of Fury again

A SEA Fury which crashed at last year's Culdrose air day will hopefully return to the skies in 2016.

The vintage Hawker fighter suffered engine failure resulting in an emergency landing – a feat which earned her pilot Lt Cdr Chris Götkie the Air Force Cross.

"The structural repairs to the airframe have been completed and the aircraft is now being assembled," said Lt Cdr Götkie.

"The tail plane, rudder and elevators are back on and the wing repairs are also well in hand. It's good to see it all coming together again."

Although the landing gear folded and the aircraft collapsed on to its belly, only a wing tip and the propeller blades were damaged. The fuselage suffered minor damage.

The Sea Fury is currently being repaired at Weald Aviation Services in Essex on behalf of the Fly Navy Heritage Trust.

"The internal damage to the engine was extensive," said Lt Cdr Götkie. "The carnage inside was pretty unbelievable really, and it is amazing that the engine continued running for as long as it did."

Tim Manna, a trustee of the Fly Navy Heritage Trust, said the search to find the right replacement engine, with the right provenance, configuration and documentation had been quite a challenge.

"Only 2,500 Centaurus Mk18 engines were built

and the authenticity of the replacement engine was extremely important to maintain the integrity of this beautiful historic Naval aircraft," he explained.

"We found a core and all the necessary components in the United States and had them shipped to the UK.

"Everything is now being checked for serviceability and we expect the rebuild of the engine to take between six to nine months.

"There is a very good chance that she will be flying again next year."

The AAIB report published earlier this month, concluded that the exact cause of the engine failure is still unknown and that forensic investigation is still ongoing.

The Sea Fury is based at Yeovilton with the Royal Navy Historic Flight with financial support provided by the trust.

It was fully insured – but the insurance doesn't cover the cost of replacing the engine itself.

The cost of rebuilding the complex 18-cylinder engine together with some corrosion repair to the airframe is expected to be in the region of £200,000 and the trust, which relies largely on public donations, still needs to raise £85,000. Anyone wishing to donate should write to the trust, RNAS Yeovilton, Ilchester, Somerset BA22 8HW or give online at www.fnhf.co.uk/t20-appeal.html.



More than 40% of those serving are dissatisfied with their pension*; good reason to join the Forces Pension Society

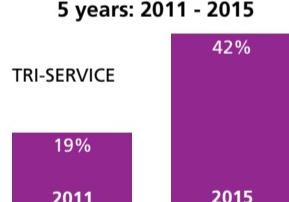


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● HMS Lancaster in the shadow of Tristan da Cunha

Pictures: L(Phot) Des Wade

Frigate's crew make light work of delivery to remote island Lancaster's Cunha landing

THE crew of HMS Lancaster saved a group of islanders two years' worth of hard graft.

The frigate's Wildcat helicopter flew in essential stores to locations around Tristan da Cunha – a job that would have taken the islanders years to complete.

Lancaster was joined by RFA Gold Rover for the visit to one of the most remote islands in the world.

"It was a great honour to visit Tristan da Cunha; an island that I have personally sailed past on a number of occasions but have never had the opportunity to visit before now," said the ship's CO Cdr Peter Laughton.

"It was a wonderful experience allowing us to continue the long and close relationship the Royal Navy has with the island."

The Island's Administrator Alex Mitham thanked HMS Lancaster for the reassurance that her presence brought and highlighted his admiration for what was achieved by the Wildcat flight team.

Tristan da Cunha is approximately 1,750 miles away from South Africa, and 1,500 miles away from the nearest land mass (Saint Helena), making it the most remote inhabited island in the world.

It is a British overseas territory with a population of just 275, comprised of 80 families, with just eight surnames.

It's been 14 months since a Royal Navy warship called at Tristan – frigate HMS Richmond, a fellow Portsmouth native.

The island's small harbour cannot accommodate a warship, so the Type 23 frigate used her helicopter to ferry personnel and supplies from ship to shore.

The Portsmouth-based ship, known as the Queen's Frigate, is halfway through her nine-month deployment.

So far the ship has travelled 22,000 miles, visiting ten ports in three continents. Highlights for the crew were attending Fleet Week in New Orleans and



● RFA Gold Rover and HMS Lancaster follow the South African ships Spioenkop, Galashewe and Isaac Dyobha into False Bay

transiting the Panama Canal.

Prior to visiting Tristan da Cunha, the ship hosted a moving memorial ceremony.

The widow of a Falklands veteran went aboard Lancaster for the committal of her husband's ashes over the site where HMS Sheffield sank.

Former Sheffield LMEM Andy 'Ray' Anderson passed away earlier this year at the age of 59 and his last wish was for his ashes to be scattered over the site where 20 of his shipmates lost their lives in 1982.

His widow Shaheen was joined onboard Lancaster by Sandy and Michael Dawson. Sandy wanted to pay respects to her first husband Chef Kevin Williams, who died when the destroyer sank during the conflict.

The ceremony on the flight deck included the reading of a poem – written for Shaheen by Ray – by the ship's only serving Falklands veteran CPO Jess James.

After her husband's ashes were

committed to the sea, rose petals and poppy wreaths were also placed at the site.

WO1 Pete Jones said: "It was a pleasure to be able to provide Ray with a fitting end to his journey."

"Ray would have been very proud of Shaheen for all of the effort she put in to make this happen."

Mrs Anderson and the Dawsons, who stayed at Liberty Lodge in Port Stanley, were assisted in their journey to the South Atlantic by the SAMA 82 charity and the Falklands Veteran Foundation.

Lancaster and Gold Rover, then made their way to South Africa, where they were welcomed by three ships from the host nation.

The frigate Spioenkop and patrol vessels Galashewe and Isaac Dyobha joined the UK vessels for a series of exercises.

Gold Rover and Lancaster are currently in Simon's Town before continuing their Atlantic duties.



● The committal of Ray Anderson's ashes, watched by his widow Shaheen



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Rousing hand for newbies

READY to safely direct helicopters – and ultimately F-35 strike fighters – along the highway to the danger zone are the latest aircraft handlers to complete arduous training.

Veteran handlers gathered at RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall to applaud the latest generation of sailors to finish the intensive 17-week course in the 70th anniversary year of their branch.

It's the task of handlers to marshal and direct the activities of aircraft on a flight deck, safely moving them around, co-ordinating their launch and recovery – and, should the worst happen, fight fires and perform salvage duties in the event of an accident or crash.

"It's been a tough and challenging course but very worthwhile with a great bunch of people," said former warfare rating NA(AH) Karen Fletcher, one of 12 sailors to pass out. "I can't wait to get to sea and serve – hopefully on the new Queen Elizabeth."

Karen received the Special Endeavour award for her efforts over the 17 weeks, presented by Vic Murphy of the Aircraft Handlers' Association.

Vic passed through the RN School of Flight Deck Operations as it's now known in the early 60s, going on to serve with HMS Victorious, Eagle and Hermes.

His branch – motto *Nostris in manibus tuti*, safe in our hands – is going through its biggest changes in 40 years as it prepares to return to big-deck carrier operations.

HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales will each require a 70-strong handling team, directing up to 108 sorties a day from the carriers' sprawling flight decks.

Handlers are on exchange with the US Navy to give them the big deck experience while the Royal Navy waits for Queen Elizabeth to begin jet operations in three years' time.



Mission led to charter

HER career was short but notable – taking on the German battleship Bismarck, escorting convoys in the Med and transporting Prime Minister Winston Churchill to a secret conference with US President Franklin D Roosevelt.

HMS Prince of Wales landed three hits on the Bismarck at the Battle of the Denmark Strait in May 1941.

She, along with the battlecruiser HMS Hood and six destroyers, were ordered to stop the pride of the German fleet from reaching the Atlantic.

Bismarck, accompanied by

the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen, was spotted in the Denmark Strait.

During the battle that followed, Prince of Wales struck the Bismarck, causing her to lose 1,000 tons of fuel, and leading to an explosion in her auxiliary boiler machinery room.

Both German vessels were initially concentrating on HMS Hood, destroying her with salvos of eight and 15-inch shells. In just four minutes, Hood, the largest battlecruiser in the world, had been sunk with the loss

of 1,418 men. Just three of her crew survived.

The Germans then turned their attention to the Prince of Wales but she managed to flee under cover of smoke. She tried to find the Bismarck the following day but then headed for Iceland, her actions against the Bismarck over.

After repairs at Rosyth, HMS Prince of Wales carried Churchill across the Atlantic for a secret conference with Roosevelt in Newfoundland, at which they signed the

Atlantic Charter.

In September 1941 the Prince of Wales joined Force H in the Mediterranean, escorting a supply convoy from Gibraltar to Malta. The convoy came under attack from Italian aircraft, with Prince of Wales downing several with her 5.25in guns.

The following month Prince of Wales left for Singapore, arriving in December. As part of a British Naval detachment known as Force Z, the ship went to investigate reports of Japanese forces landing at Kuantan.

The British came under attack from Japanese bombers and torpedo aircraft. One torpedo struck Prince of Wales on the port side, wrecking her

outer propeller shaft and causing the ship to list.

A fourth torpedo attack then saw HMS Repulse sink before a 500kg bomb hit Prince of Wales's catapult deck, ripping a huge hole in her port hull. The order was given to abandon ship and she sank with the loss of 327 men.

The two Royal Navy vessels were the first capital ships to be sunk solely by air power in the open sea. Both wrecks remain in 223ft of water near Kuantan in the South China Sea.

Class: King George V battleship
Builder: Cammell Laird, Birkenhead
Laid down: January 1 1937
Launched: May 3 1939
Commissioned: January 19 1941
Displacement: 43,786 tons
Length: 745ft
Beam: 103ft 2in
Draught: 34ft 4in
Speed: 28.3kts
Range: 15,600 nm at 10kts
Complement: 1,521
Propulsion: Eight Admiralty three-drum small-tube boilers; Four sets Parsons geared turbines
Armour: Main belt – 14.7in; lower belt – 5.4in; deck – 5-6in; main turrets – 12.75in; barbettes – 12.75in; bulkheads – 10-12in; conning tower – 2-3in.
Armament: Ten BL 14in Mark VII; 16 QF 5.25in MkI; 32 QF 2 pdr 1.575in Mk VIII; 80 UP projectors
Aircraft carried: Four Supermarine Walrus seaplanes; one double-ended catapult
Pennant number: 53
Motto: *Ich Dien* (I serve)

Facts and figures



PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

BENEATH the palm trees the casings of naval shells act as makeshift headstones on the graves of more than two dozen Empire troops in Mesopotamia.

Our rewind through WW1 history assisted by the seemingly-inexhaustible photographic archive of the Imperial War Museum takes us to September 1915 and the town of Kut-al-Amara on the north shore of the Tigris.

This town of 6,500 souls, situated in a loop in one of Iraq's two great waterways, fell to British forces at the end of the month.

For although one glittering prize – indeed the greatest prize of all in the Ottoman world – clearly lay beyond the grasp of Allied troops by now, the empire's capital Constantinople, another lay tantalisingly within their grasp: Baghdad. The Iraqi capital lay not 100 miles away...

Supporting the troops of the 6th (Poona) Division and 12th (Indian) Division throughout their push on Baghdad was an assortment of Royal Navy sloops and gunboats, dubbed 'Townshend's regatta' by the men after Sir Charles Townshend, the general leading the expedition.

With an insufficient number of mules at his disposal, the Tigris was Townshend's lifeline, its source of his supplies, the transportation for his wounded.

The Turks were as aware as Townshend of the importance of the river to any British advance – and took the appropriate steps to defend it.

Half a dozen miles outside Kut they drove two barges into the river bank, strung a heavy metal cable between them and sank a dhow mid-channel to anchor the barrier. No vessel could pass up or downstream. The Turks defended this



boom with artillery pieces, machine guns and entrenched troops – then waited for the British to come.

Come they did. On September 28 1915, the gunboat Comet – a 144-tonne paddle boat – and a couple of armed launches raced up the Tigris.

First they tried to destroy the dhow with gunfire, but failed. Next, as the most powerful vessel, Comet charged the cable. Speed was no more successful than gunfire. The barrier held.

As a last resort, the Comet's skipper, Lt Cdr Edgar Cookson, brought his boat alongside the

dhow, jumped on to it axe in hand and began to hack away at the metal wire.

Turkish fire struck him almost immediately. Surviving shipmates hauled his mortally-wounded body back on board the Comet where he gave his final instructions: "I'm done, it's a failure. Get back at full

speed." With that, the 31-year-old officer died.

He died in vain. The battle on land decided the fate of the boom defence. Defeated, the Turks fell back and the following day the river obstacle was occupied without a fight, the cable removed and free passage of the Tigris assured.

Edgar Cookson was initially interred in what were described as 'the Chahaila Mounds' – possibly the temporary graves in this photograph. His body was subsequently exhumed and laid to rest with more than 4,600 WW1 fallen in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery at Amara.

From Kut, Charles Townshend and his troops would continue the march on Baghdad – supported by his regatta all the way.

The gunboats could do nothing to turn the tide at Ctesiphon, just 18 miles from the capital, where the Empire forces ran into stronger German-Ottoman troops in the shadow of the ruins of the ancient city's iconic arch.

Realising he could no longer reach Baghdad, Townshend fell back on Kut and – fatally – decided to dig in, convinced relief would come.

It tried, by land and river, but could not break through. The nearly-five-month siege of the town ended with ignominious surrender at the end of April 1916.

The beaten troops – 13,000 of them – were marched to Aleppo in Syria. Three quarters of the British and half the Indian troops captured died en route or in captivity. Charles Townshend lived out the rest of the war as a 'VIP prisoner' on an island in the middle of the Sea of Marmara – and was vilified by most of his contemporaries after the war as a result.

■ This photograph (IWM Q 24534) is one of more than ten million held by the Imperial War Museum. They can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@IWM.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



After years in build, it's time for Monkey business

A TRADITIONAL Faslane welcome – rain, black clouds – greeted the newest war machine in the Royal Navy's arsenal, HMS Artful.

Making her debut in the port which will be her home for the next quarter of a century, this is Britain's most advanced warship arriving on the Clyde after her week-long maiden trials.

Nearly ten and a half years after the first steel was cut for her, and 15 months after she was rolled out of the cavernous construction hall at BAE System's yard in Barrow, the £1bn hunter-killer struck out into the Irish Sea.

CO Cdr Scott Bower guided the third of the Silent Service's Astute-class boats out of Devonshire Dock, past the raised span of the Michaelson Road bridge, down the dog-leg of Buccleuch Dock, into the Walney Channel and finally out into the open waters of the Irish Sea.

"The crew, alongside the workers at BAE Systems, have done a sterling job in generating more than a million parts into a submarine," said Cdr Bower of his boat which has been compared in terms of complexity with the Space Shuttle.

"Artful's capabilities are extraordinary – she represents the next step in our country's history of operating submarines."

"I'm now looking forward to proving what she is capable of during our sea trials – and continuing our progress towards our first operational mission."

In the 15 months since the boat entered the water, Artful has undergone numerous tests of her propulsion and power systems – notably her nuclear reactor – and carried out a partial dive in the dock (it's wide and long enough to accommodate an A-boat, but at 'only' 82ft waters are not deep enough to submerge the Astutes entirely).

Like the boat, the 100-strong crew have gone through similarly-exhaustive instruction and practice – most have been with the boat for a good couple of years.

Those efforts culminated in an assessment by the team from the Flag Officer Sea Training organisation just before Artful put to sea.

Thanks to the lessons learned building her sisters, the boat departed Barrow in a considerably more advanced state – which will speed up the time it will take for her to complete trials and training and beginning front-line patrols.

Chief of Materiel Fleet, Vice Admiral Simon Lister, said Artful's arrival in Faslane marked "a key milestone in the Astute-class programme."

"Building the first two submarines has taught us many lessons. Artful can soon begin operations as the newest submarine in the Royal Navy."

■ As Artful left Barrow, work began on the first stage of a £300m revamp of the facilities so the next-generation nuclear deterrent boats can be built there.

A £23m new logistics facility is the first structure to go up as part of the eight-year programme.



Ambush's talented uckers

THE crew of the newest operational submarine upheld one of the Senior Service's most popular traditions during a brief break in Gib.

Forty of Ambush's crew knuckled down to a fiercely contested Uckers 'Champions League' in one of the Navy's principal haunts on the Rock: the Horseshoe – better known by matelots as the Donkey's Flip Flop.

Similar to ludo and described by some as 'more strategic than chess and infinitely more watchable than darts', the game remains a firm favourite in the RN, despite the advent of X-Boxes, iPads and DVDs.

The Mighty Bush's LET Dan O'Riordan decided to exploit this

passion for uckers with the day-long contest.

After the upsets, accusations and recriminations were done, the final arrived with CPO Mark Imrie squaring up against his boat's Weapon Engineer Officer, Lt Cdr Al Rose.

Edged on by a sizeable contingent of former sailors and ex-pats, the senior rating began with an inordinate number of sixes leaving his opponent floundering – and went on to win the match with an eight-piecing (the equivalent of an 8-0 victory in football...).

For their efforts the winner and runners-up received 'coveted' championship T-shirts from Ambush's skipper, Cdr Justin Codd.

Vigilant in mind and body

HMS Vigilant's crew ensured they were at the peak of fitness while they carried out the most important duty of any of the nation's military.

A series of sporting challenges were laid on for off-watch crew as the boat carried out a 14-week deterrent patrol.

With no PTI aboard it fell to senior warfare rating CPO David Bathgate to fill the gap, organising a rowing competition, a triathlon and a challenge inspired by a health magazine.

To start, there was the Fleet 50 x 1k row for submarines and ships with more than 100 crew (a V-boat has around 130). Fifty of those sailors or commandos row one kilometre each in as fast a time as possible to win the Montague Cup.

There are two Concept II rowing machines aboard Vigilant, squeezed in whatever space is available (as is all gym kit on the bomber).

The deeps completed their 50km in 3h 34s with Sub Lt William Child posting the fastest time for his 1,000-metre dash – 3m 6s.

The machines were in action again for the boat's triathlon – a 5km row, 5km run (on the treadmill) and 10km ride (on an exercise cycle).

Eighteen crew signed up to win a framed HMS Vigilant embroidered plaque... which now enjoys pride of place in the cabin of WEO Lt Cdr Gary Carpenter. He completed the three physical challenges in 1h 1m dead – two seconds faster than Lt Gareth Griffiths, the boat's tactical systems officer.

And finally, 38 crew rose to the Fitbit challenge – eight exercises such as rowing, running, cycling, weights and jumps determined by Men's Health magazine, run back-to-back, against the clock, testing strength, speed, power and endurance, slightly adapted given the limits of the exercise equipment on board.

Lt Griffiths completed all eight events in 14m 32s, with LCH Gary Thompson snapping at his heels eight seconds behind.

"The submariner's life has traditionally been seen as a sedentary one, but we must maintain a high level of physical and mental fitness," said CPO Bathgate.

Vanguard honors WW1 forebear

SUBMARINERS aboard HMS Vanguard paid their respects to those who died in the dreadnought, which bore the same name 98 years ago.

The battleship, which fought at the Battle of Jutland in 1916, sank following an accidental magazine explosion in July 1917 with the loss of 843 hands – one of the largest accidental losses of life for the Royal Navy.

During a recent trip to the Orkney Islands by members of the current HMS Vanguard, some of the boat's crew sailed out to the site of the wreck – a designated war grave – for a wreath-laying ceremony.

The sailors were accompanied by members of the

Orkney Royal Naval Association for the emotional visit, which was followed by a trip to Lyness Naval Cemetery where a further wreath was laid on the Vanguard Memorial.

The submariners also visited the Sea Cadet unit TS Thorfinn to present a cheque for £500. Two crewmen, AB Robbie Watson and LET Dominic Hall, both former Sea Cadets, took to the water for an evening to carry out powerboat training with the current cadets.

During their visit to Orkney personnel visited Ness Battery, the best-preserved artillery battery in the islands and the Scapa Flow Visitor Centre and Museum.



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● Lt Neil Amey, Lt Cdr Ole Gregerson and Lt Cdr Fabio Fonseca were among the final group of exchange pilots with 815 NAS

Tchau, farvel, and cheers from final Lynx exchange pilots

THIRTY-five years of foreign aviators flying one of the Navy's most trusted helicopters have come to an end with the last airmen touching down.

Since the late 1970s pilots and observers – responsible for navigation, weapons systems and sensors – from eight nations have flown Lynx helicopters on the front line with the Fleet Air Arm.

In various forms and upgrades – the current Mk8 variant is the last – it's been the mainstay of Royal Navy frigate and destroyer operations around the globe.

The Lynx has also proved to be one of the UK's most successful aviation exports, flown by a dozen armed forces around the globe as well as in its mother country.

That has led to long-standing liaison agreements as well as one-off exchanges, allowing aviators from Brazil, USA, France, Denmark, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and Norway to clamber into the cockpits of Lynx from 702 and 815 Naval Air Squadrons for up to three years at a time.

But with the veteran aircraft being replaced by its 21st-Century souped-up lookalike, Wildcat – the first aircraft is on its maiden deployment with HMS Lancaster in the South Atlantic – the liaison has come to an end.

The final quartet of exchange fliers were Lt Cdr Fabio Fonseca (Brazil), Lt Cdr Ole Gregerson (Denmark), Lt Neil Amey (Australia) and Lt Thomas Ribot (France), who all finished their time with 815 Squadron, the last FAA formation still operating the Lynx, within days of each other.

The very first exchange pilot – Capt Niels Erik Sorensen, who finished his career in uniform as his country's defence attaché in London between 2008 and 2011 – says his time in a Royal Navy Lynx remains an unforgettable experience.

Capt Sorensen helped introduce the then-new helicopter into front-line service, testing new equipment and helping to develop the tactics which would serve fellow Lynx fliers in good stead for years to come.

His knowledge of Danish fast craft also gave the British fliers the edge during annual NATO exercises when Allied forces tested their mettle against missile and motorboats during the alliance's annual Bold Game exercises.

"During my conversion course I was paired with a stout Scotsman with a strong accent – and he mumbled! I never learned to understand him speaking through the mike so we developed a sign language, to much amusement in the squadron," he said.

"My family and I had two-and-a-half great years in Somerset – we were met with amazing hospitality and made very good friends, bonds that still exist."

The last of his countrymen on exchange has flown with the Black Cats display team and passed on his experience to student Lynx crews.

Lt Cdr Fonseca clocked up 328 hours – just shy of two whole weeks – in Lynx cockpits by day and night working with RFA Argus, HMS Ocean and Type 45 destroyers and Type 23 frigates.

And Australian Lt Amey has taught two batches of students, including instructing in the art of evading F-16 Falcon jets in Danish skies, and above all loved the cultural experience of the exchange.

"My wife, two daughters and I have had a fantastic time, meeting wonderful people, making some close friends and travelling throughout Europe," he said.

As for Lt Ribot, thanks to his duties with 815 and deployments aboard HMS Diamond and Kent (in the Med and Gulf respectively) he's spent more time at sea with the RN than his own navy.

"I'm the last foreign officer to fly in the Lynx and I'm sad for others, they will never discover this 'sports car,'" he says.

"Being on exchange in 815 squadron was like being part of a family – the Lynx family, a small world where everyone knows everyone and we all work together to achieve one aim."

815's CO Cdr Phil Richardson said that down the years his squadron had "benefited immensely" from the presence of overseas aviators.

"What the foreign aircrew have brought in terms of their culture and aviation experience and knowledge has been extremely valuable and the lessons learnt from them – and passed to them – have made the Fleet Air Arm much better," he added.

"We've established long-lasting relationships with exchange officers and on many occasions the RN has benefited significantly by having friendly forces in foreign countries."

Wildcat squadron passes its first



major test during sortie to Portugal



Ovar-achieving

WITH a different cod recipe for every day of the year, Portugal is heaven on earth for cats.

So where better to take the Wildcats from 825 NAS for a two-week exercise?

Five of the new helicopters – and a 65-strong engineering and support crew – went over to Ovar, a city in the Aveiro district of Portugal, for some hot-weather training.

Led by Lt Cdr Hugh Saltonstall, the squadron's senior pilot, the five Wildcat HMA Mk2s left RNAS Yeovilton for a seven-leg journey, taking in the Channel Islands, France, Spain and finally Ovar, 40km from Porto on the Atlantic coast.

The journey, which involved ten hours of flying, allowed the crews to practice formation flying and was the first time the Royal Navy had deployed multiple Wildcats since 825 NAS was stood up in October last year, following the decommissioning of 700W.

Aircrews were met at Ovar by their support team, led by Lt Charlotte Milne, 825 NAS's Deputy Air Engineer Officer, who made the much-quicker journey from Brize Norton in a C17.

"Although the support planning was complicated by the fact no one has previously deployed with so many Wildcat outside the UK, the trip has been a huge success from an engineering perspective," said Lt Milne.

"The facilities provided by the Portuguese Air Force have been ideal for our needs and allowed us to operate 24 hours a day to achieve our flying requirement."

The aircraft completed more than 150 hours of flying, despite the helicopters being grounded for a day because of summer fog.

The squadron completed in excess



of 50 hours of flying and 38 training serials by day and night in just over four days, with all three conversion crews – those moving from the Lynx to the Wildcat – completing their final assessments.

The squadron was able to complete multiple training serials on each flight as Ovar is less than half a mile from the sea, compared to Yeovilton, where it takes 15 minutes over land for the journey to the English Channel operating area.

"The Portuguese Air Force Base at Ovar was perfectly situated for the shipping lanes to the west of Porto, which were ideal to fully test the crews," said instructor pilot Lt Cdr Martin Van Duin.

"All of them subsequently completed the course objectives successfully, proving their ability to fly and fight this new aircraft which provides game-changing capabilities to the Royal Navy."

As well as providing warm-weather tactical training, the trip also successfully tested the squadron's logistical support chain for the first time.

During their down time, aircrew

and engineers took part in mountain biking in the Douro and paddle-boarding, supported by instructors from Yeovilton and HMS Temeraire.

Commanding Officer of 825 NAS Cdr Glyn Owen said: "The opportunity to combine challenging activities and adventurous training during this detachment has been tremendous, enabling 70 of the squadron's personnel to take part in adventurous training."

Before the aircrews left for the return journey to the UK they got the chance to show off the Wildcat to a Portuguese Navy Lynx squadron and a Portuguese procurement team at Montijo, south of Lisbon.

Another ten hours of flying saw the detachment retrace its steps, albeit in some challenging weather, to return successfully to RNAS Yeovilton with three new crews to add to the Wildcat force.

THIS is a world first in Naval aviation.

The catapult shuttle of a tiny drone falls away as it takes to the skies off Chesil Beach – and HMS Mersey launches a 3D-printed aircraft for the first time.

The small aircraft made a 500-metre flight from the fishery patrol ship and on to the pebble shore in an experiment led by scientists from the University of Southampton.

They designed and printed the unmanned 'SULSA' (Southampton University Laser-Sintered Aircraft) – at three kilograms it weighs the equivalent of three bags of sugar – fitted an engine and camera and looked for a suitable test bed.

They found it in the RN, as sailors from First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas tried to harness the power of the white heat of unmanned vehicle technology.

The Navy is hosting its first 'robot wars' in October next year and is already heavily using ScanEagle remote-controlled surveillance aircraft on operations in the Gulf.

SULSA is less than half the size of ScanEagle. The aircraft is made of nylon, printed in four major parts and assembled without the use of any tools.

It takes just one day to print (that's right, only 24 hours for SULSA...) and another day for the plastics to cool down. As long as you have the design and a 3D printer, in theory you can produce a SULSA anywhere in the world and have it flying in 48 hours.

The aircraft cruises at nearly 60mph and is all but noiseless thanks to its tiny engine.

The maiden flight from Mersey lasted no more than five minutes and was recorded both from the ship courtesy of the university's 'control van' and from the aircraft's on-board mini

video camera.

"The Royal Navy has learned a considerable amount from operating ScanEagle in the Middle East and we're thinking about how we carry out intelligence gathering surveillance and reconnaissance in the future," said Cdr Bow Wheaton, the RN's Commander Maritime Capability (Aviation).

"A 3D-printed aircraft is relatively simple, relatively cheap and can be launched with relative ease – the demonstration was very successful."

The trial on Mersey was prompted by a visit by Admiral Zambellas to Southampton University – where he studied aeronautics 35 years ago – when he was shown developments in unmanned aircraft by Prof Andy Keane. He and his team first flew SULSA four years ago, but it had never flown from sea until the trial off the Dorset coast.

Prof Keane was as delighted as the RN by a "remarkably successful" trial.

"The key to the increased use of unmanned aerial vehicles is the simple production of low cost and rugged airframes," he added.

"We believe our pioneering use of 3D-printed nylon has advanced design thinking in the UAV community worldwide."

Admiral Zambellas said the test launch on Mersey was "a small glimpse into the innovation and forward thinking that is now embedded in our Navy's approach" to unmanned systems.

"It's well known that our first squadron of remotely piloted aircraft have proven their worth in the Gulf, providing persistent airborne surveillance across huge areas of sea."

"We are after more and greater capability in this field which delivers huge value for money. And, because it's new technology, with young people behind it, we're having fun doing it."

Italian interoperabilità

A ROYAL Navy Merlin landed on the flight deck of Italy's flagship for the first time as part of the international migrant mission in the Mediterranean.

The crew of the helicopter from 814 NAS – normally based at Culdrose near Helston in Cornwall – flew on to the aircraft carrier ITS Cavour.

The helicopter visited the Italian ship in the middle of the Mediterranean to receive the latest updates on the ongoing migrant problem in North Africa.

The Merlin is one half of Britain's input to the European Union mission alongside survey ship HMS Enterprise.

Unlike Operation Weald, conducted by HMS Bulwark – which rescued more than 4,700 souls in just under two months – working with three Merlins from 814, the focus of the EU operations is more on stopping migrant traffic in the first place.

To that end, the remaining Merlin left in the Mediterranean is carrying out daily patrols of four-five hours' duration.

"The mission now is surveillance, building up 'patterns of life', working with the commanders in the Cavour to find out where the migrants are coming from," said Lt Cdr Chris Wood, 814 NAS' senior pilot.

"There's good international co-operation and support on this mission. It's European Union, not NATO, so it's different from what we're used to, although many of the nations are the same."

"Working with the Cavour has been a first for us. They operate the EH101, which is the Italian version of the Merlin – it's similar, but not identical."





No longer the unknown hero

ROYAL Marines past and present pay tribute to one of their own, whose identity remained a mystery for 97 years.

L/Cpl William Whitmore was identified after historians researched two unidentified graves in a cemetery in Padstow, Cornwall.

Padstow Museum chairman John Buckingham and Sussex-based historian Peter Smith identified the first grave as that of Royal Marine William Moore but the second grave proved more difficult.

"We had little to go on apart from a burial date on the headstone, but we love a challenge," said Mr Smith.

Their research revealed that along with Moore, William Whitmore, born in Stoke-on-Trent, had also died on the

SS Anna Sofie, an armed merchantman sunk by German submarine U-55 four miles west of Trevose Head on July 23, 1918.

Using the burial date, they found an inquest report dated August 23 1918, which showed that the body of a Marine, identified by his uniform, was washed up at Tregudda Gorge just over three weeks after the Anna Sofie was torpedoed. Days later, the Marine received a funeral and was buried near to Moore.

Determined to confirm their findings, the historians conducted a painstaking study of casualty records for July 1918.

Sure that Whitmore was the only body that could have washed up there and then, they used factors such as time the body was in the sea, which

the inquest estimated at eight to ten days, and ships that were sunk along the North Cornish coast in that period.

A written account from a survivor, the last person to see Whitmore alive, confirmed he had jumped overboard.

Moore and Whitmore were part of a military detachment on the Anna Sofie operating the 4in gun. Merchant ships were armed to help protect them.

The inquest report gave the historians another crucial clue. A tattoo on the forearm appeared to show the letter 'M' with the figure of a woman. This matched Whitmore's Service record and a story his wife Margaret always told Isabel Pope, the daughter of their first child, Kathleen.

"She told me that William and she had wanted a token of their love for each other to remain with them

always," Isabel said. While his wife's tattoo would have shown the figure of a Marine with the letter W, Whitmore's was of a woman with the letter M.

Isabel said these stories kept the memory of her grandfather alive.

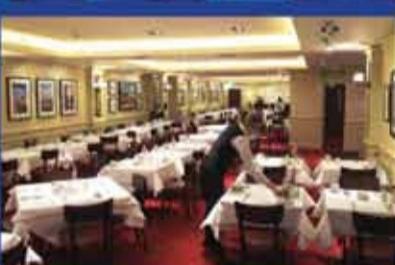
"I wish my mother had lived to see it," she said.

Whitmore was 41 when he died. He served in the Royal Navy before WW1 and joined the Royal Marines Light Infantry at the outbreak of the war.

Residents from Padstow joined Royal Marines for a rededication service conducted by the Rev Tudor Botwood from RNAS Culdrose, who said: "Our gathering here reminds us that those who give their lives in the service of this country are always worthy of honour. The Kohima epitaph reminds us: *that for our tomorrow they gave their today.*"



● Royal Marine William Whitmore with wife Margaret and their eldest child Kathleen



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SEARCHING FOR NEW LEADERS OF THE PACK

ROYAL Marines have completed a demanding 11-week course to determine the corporals of tomorrow.

The course – run by the Commando Training Centre at Lympstone, near Exeter, and spread across Devon and Wales – is regarded as among the toughest a marine will face throughout his career, preparing him for the leap from marine to corporal.

Each year the Corps requires between 250 and 300 new corporals – all of whom will be expected to lead marines in action.

"We take young marines who have been in the Corps between four and eight years, we place them on a command course and we teach them how to instruct, how to lead, and how to command troops on operations," said C/Sgt Tug Wilson, 38, the Junior Command Course chief instructor.

This year the course has been trialling the use of tactical engagement simulation (TES) equipment. Troops are tracked on the ground by GPS and each marine's weapon fires a laser which is registered on other troops' equipment.

"The TES kit gives us the ability to see where they patrol, to identify their fire and how many people are hitting targets, how many people are missing targets, and who gets 'killed'," said C/Sgt Wilson.

"It means you can conduct an after-action review where you can play that incident back and show them on video how they performed and what they did, and what their decision making on the ground led to other individuals doing; That's invaluable to the juniors."

Instructors also carry tablets and cameras and are able to video attacks and then replay them to the students.

The first demanding hurdle to get over is a four-mile speed march carrying 32lbs of kit on day one. Fail and you are sent



● Royal Marines prepare an assault on a building at Sennybridge

straight back to your unit.

After a two-week introduction by external instructors, the students meet their course instructors at the end of a gruelling log run; a five-mile slog around Woodbury Common as eight men haul a telegraph pole.

During the course students are sent on four exercises, including two at Sennybridge in Wales, an urban combat exercise at Caerwent, also in Wales, and an amphibious cliff assault in Plymouth. They are dropped at the base of cliffs at night which they then scale before carrying out a troop attack.

They also spend a week in north Devon practising eight-man section attacks.

The course includes a navigation element, three night exercises over ten 11km and three static map exercises.

"Being able to assault the enemy is only part of our role," said C/Sgt Wilson.

"Being able to find the enemy, being able to avoid the enemy, being able to read the ground and use it to our advantage,

are all things that a junior leader needs to know."

The students also need to pass a fieldcraft section and three military knowledge tests before being assessed on their personal qualities, such as their physical bearing, determination, commitment and judgement.

C/Sgt Wilson said: "We're trying to get an individual that can produce work to a high standard and can instruct to a high standard.

"It's rightly a demanding course. To pass it you need to be determined.

"I've never been more tired or cold than I have on operations and I think we replicate the effects of combat as best as we can in a safe environment."

At the end of the course many of the new corporals will attend a skills at arm course, learning how to conduct weapons training and safely run shooting ranges.



Pictures: LA(Phot) Dean Nixon

RN Officers gain essential LinkedIn knowledge at OA workshops

ROYAL Navy officers in Bristol and Portsmouth have mastered their LinkedIn skills with a series of successful workshops, run by social media expert Lincoln Coutts.

One RN officer from a recent workshop in Portsmouth said *"This practical, hands on workshop was a great opportunity for me to understand the functions of LinkedIn."*

The workshops are designed to take the mystery out of this essential networking tool and help attendees create a profile that really shines.



They are part of a series of regional workshops, complementing the recent openings of OA offices in Bristol, Leeds and Portsmouth.

The OA's next LinkedIn event takes place in Bristol on the 29th September.

To find out more and to register go to www.officersassociation.org.uk/events

Monty Halls to speak at OA networking event in Bristol on 19th October



THE OA is delighted to announce that inspirational speaker, broadcaster and former Royal Marine, Monty Halls, will share stories from his many varied and exciting experiences at our next networking event in Bristol.

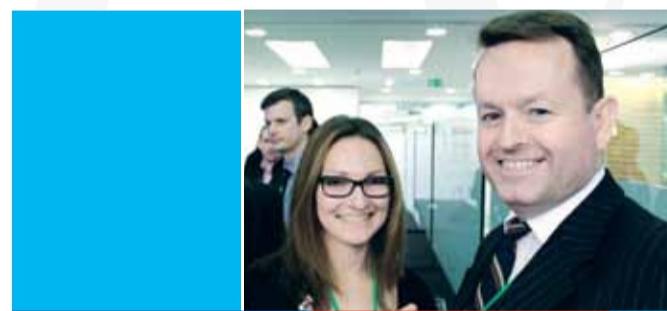
Never one to stick with one 'career', Monty's taken an extraordinary path that has seen him work with Nelson Mandela, gain a 1st in marine biology and lead various expeditions

to Southern Africa. He is best known for the BBC2 series *'The Fisherman's Apprentice'*, where he travelled to Cornwall to live and work as a fisherman.

Officers will have the opportunity to meet Monty in Bristol on the 19th October, along with a number of influential employers in the region.

To find out more and to register go to www.officersassociation.org.uk/events

Independent, expert careers advice and services for officers



The Officers' Association (OA) is an independent charity working closely with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) to help officers find jobs outside of the military.

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Divers render one of RFA's hallowed sites safe

Deep deeds on Darkdale



● One of the dive team hovers above the wreckage searching for unexploded shells while (left) civilian diver raises the RFA's Blue Ensign 42 metres down at the end of the successful operation to tap oil from the tanker's hold and (below) the shattered bow section ripped apart by one of U-68's torpedoes



IN THE shadow of Ladder Hill and the colourful buildings of St Helena's capital Jamestown, the diving and salvage vessel Pacific Dolphin 'hovers' over one of the most venerated sites in the 110-year history of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

Below lie the shattered remains of RFA Darkdale, for 74 years gradually disintegrating at the bottom of James Bay after being torpedoed by a German submarine.

A 12-strong team of Royal Navy specialist clearance divers descended 42 metres (137ft) to the Atlantic seabed to remove unexploded ammunition – the first step in a concerted two-month effort to draw oil from the sunken tanker and eliminate any threat to the wildlife around the island.

Darkdale was stationed in St Helena to provide fuel to passing Royal Navy warships engaged in the struggle against the German Navy.

She was torn apart on the night of October 21-22 1941 when U-boat ace *Korvettenkapitän* Karl-Friedrich Merten sent three torpedoes from his U-68 into the tanker.

Darkdale exploded, turned over and sank almost immediately, taking 41 men aboard down with her; only two men, who were on deck at the time and were blown clear by the blast, survived.

And there the wreck lay for nearly 70 years, until winter storms in 2010 disturbed it and caused some oil to leak, prompting inhabitants of the small British Overseas Territory (pop. 4,255) to call for action.

Some of the oil trapped in Darkdale's tanks when she went down has dispersed over the past seven decades, but experts estimated anywhere between 2,300 and 4,950 cubic metres of fuel – at least enough to fill an Olympic-sized swimming pool – remains trapped in the decaying wreck. Were it to escape, it could damage the James Bay foreshore and indigenous and visiting wildlife.

Detailed surveys of the tanker's remains were carried out by ice patrol ship HMS Protector and the MOD's SALvage and Marine Operations organisation (SALMO) but before the physical act of sucking the fuel out of Darkdale's hold, there was a considerable amount of ammunition to render safe; the tanker carried 4.7in and 12-pdr guns, plus various machine-guns, as protection.

They were of little use against the seventh highest-scoring U-boat commander; by the time his boat was sighted by one of Darkdale's crew, Merten's 'eels' were racing through the Atlantic. Seconds later they struck.

"All we could see then were flames, flames and yet more flames burning as high as a house and flaring up repeatedly in the dark night sky: from bow to stern there were flames 20 or 30 metres high – there was nothing to be seen of the ship herself. She was one raging inferno," Merten remembered half a century later.

"Rigid, and also deeply moved, we silently stood on the bridge before this orgy of destruction."

"No man could survive that – and they were sailors like us. When nothing happened after a good five minutes steering away, I let the crew come up on deck and see the inferno for themselves. No-one celebrated. Every man stood there shuddering."

Part of the upturned hull of the ship protruded from the Atlantic for a while before the waters finally closed over it.

Today, the wreck is split into two sections with the more intact bow upturned while the shattered stern lies on its side. The divers found the remains fragile – but intact – with the bulk of the ammunition littered around the capsized bow.



The team removed 38 shells used by Darkdale's two main guns – but numbers barely tell the story.

"We knew there was ordnance down there but we didn't know where it was or what state it was in," said Lt Olly Shepherd, who led the 12-strong team drawn from across the RN diving community.

"A lot of the ammunition was concreted on to the wreck so we had to chip it away. As we did, we got oil in our faces from small pockets of oil."

Once removed from the wreck, the shells were dumped in water one and a half miles deep where they'll be of no danger to anyone.

Even 42 metres down, the waters off James Bay are a pleasant 19°C and visibility is a good 20 metres – making for excellent diving conditions, while the frogmen were treated to wonderful close-up encounters with St Helena's marine life, barracuda especially.

The Navy divers were impressed by the scale of the operation to deal with the fuel, involving experts and equipment at the cutting edge of salvage work – some of the kit has been built specially for the Darkdale mission, while teams who broke up the Costa Concordia had been called in.

They found the corrosion in Darkdale's shattered stern to be worse than in her more intact bow section; over several weeks they fitted valves in the hull to release the fuel and allow it to be collected safely. In all, around 1,940 cubic metres of fuel was removed – enough to fill the tanks of 35,000 family cars.

The oil has been taken away by a tanker for reprocessing and while there is still some fuel in the wreck, which will continue to deteriorate, the risk of large-scale environmental damage has now been eliminated.

The last act of the operation was one of remembrance as civilian diver Gordon Vickers raised the Royal Fleet Auxiliary's Blue Ensign on the wreck for the first time since the bitter night of October 21 1941.

"It's been a real cutting-edge, edge of the envelope operation, all taking place off a tiny island in the middle of the Atlantic," said Lt Shepherd. "We were under a lot of pressure – there was a lot of equipment on the surface waiting to begin work, but it couldn't until we'd finished making the area safe."

"It's the most challenging thing any of us have ever done but also a brilliant experience, something really special to be involved in."

St Helena is one of the least accessible inhabited islands on the planet – there's no airport (it's due to open next year) – so the divers flew out to Cape Town, then made a five-day boat journey on the world's last Royal Mail Ship, before waiting for their kit to join them with the specialist diving platform vessel.

That gave them time to get to know the small island and its islanders and help out at National Trust projects, painting and maintaining school playgrounds and assisting a disabled charity group.

"St Helena is an incredible place," said Lt Shepherd. "The wreck of the Darkdale is a big part of the history of the island. We got really involved with the local community – they were extremely interested in what we were doing, particularly because of the unique and fragile eco-system."



Last hurrah for heroes of WW2



• Above: Royal Navy personnel take part in the parade; Right: An Arctic Convoy veteran; Left: HM Band Royal Marines dismantle the Drumhead following the Service at Horse Guards Parade

Pictures:
POA(Phot) Owen Cooban



SERVING Royal Navy joined WW2 veterans at a day of national commemorations in the capital to mark the 70th anniversary of victory in Japan.

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh – a First Lieutenant in HMS Whelp, which saw service in Tokyo Bay in 1945 – began the commemorations at a service of Remembrance at St Martin-in-the-Fields Church.

Later the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall joined hundreds of veterans and their families, along with current members of the Armed Forces for a special commemorative event on Horse Guards Parade.

The event began with a spectacular flypast of current and historic aircraft – although sadly the RN Historic Flight's Swordfish, which was due to lead the formation, broke down shortly before its planned take-off from Biggin Hill.

Wreaths were laid by the Prince of Wales on behalf of the nation, the Prime Minister on behalf of the government and the National Chairman of the Royal British Legion John Crisford with John Giddings, Chairman of the Burma Star Association, on behalf of the veterans.

The Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Portsmouth led the musical accompaniment,

while buglers and percussionists piled up their drums for the ceremonial drumhead service.

When no altar could be found in times of conflict, a makeshift one created from drums served as a point of worship.

C/Sgt Bugler Phil Hawkins, Bugle Major in charge of the Corps of Drums of the band said: "It is important for us as a nation to pay tribute to the veterans of World War 2 and the sacrifices they made so that we might enjoy the freedoms we have today."

Bugler Adam Peers, 23, who has just completed his training at the RM School of Music in Portsmouth, added: "I enjoyed being part of the ceremony paying tribute to our veterans."

Countess Mountbatten of Burma, whose father Lord Mountbatten was the Supreme Allied Commander South East Asia, wrote a special VJ Day message which was read out.

Afterwards, veterans, civilian internees, their descendants and families marched along Whitehall to Westminster Abbey, cheered on by spectators lining the route. For the final part of the parade route, they were flanked by serving members of the Armed Forces.

A reception was also held in the grounds of Westminster Abbey, hosted by the Royal British Legion.

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Local heroes

THE Met summary on the morning of Culdrose Air Day said 'nil significant cloud' – but with respect to Professor Fog and his team, they were overtaken by events, writes Mike Gray.

Because the blue skies over the Cornish air station were filled with billowing clouds of green, white and red smoke as the Italian Air Force's *Frecce Tricolori* (the Tricolour Arrows) thrilled a crowd of more than 20,000 people with their breathtaking manoeuvres.

The darlings of the *Aeronautica Militare* – the 313° Gruppo Addestramento Acrobatico to give them their formal title – were accompanied by operatic arias and a passionate, enthusiastic commentary by a colleague of the pilots.

"Ladies and gentlemen" on the airfield were exhorted to "look to your left for a photograph... three, two, one, NOW!" and other such suggestions.

On completion of their performance – their only UK appearance this year – one pilot taxied to a refuelling point to fill up then launched his Aermacchi MB-339PAN aircraft along the runway again, setting course for home and a meeting with the newest member of his family, his wife having just given birth.

Two other European visitors, once on opposite sides of the Cold War, also made a big impression with visitors to the show.

A Mig-29 Fulcrum A from Poland announced its participation in the show with an earsplitting roar and a vertical climb, then carried out a series of turns, ascents, dives and passes which showcased the raw power and agility of the twin-engined fighter.

And an F/A-18C Hornet of the Swiss Air Force, making its debut at the Air Day, proved equal to the challenge laid down by the Polish jet, apparently defying the laws of gravity and aerodynamics.

Pilot Capt Julien 'Teddy' Meister not only thrilled spectators, but also caught the eyes of the professionals, winning the laurels for the best flying display at the show.

But it would be wrong to suggest that the overseas contingent was the only reason to turn up – there was plenty of local representation, and a strong Royal Navy contingent, with aircraft representing the best of yesterday



and today.

One historic aircraft not at the show this year was the Royal Navy Historic Flight's Sea Fury T20, which was skilfully force-landed at Air Day 2014 after an engine failure.

But the pilot who nursed the stricken plane down, RNHF Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Chris Götte, was at the show, flying a T6 Texan trainer.

Of the Sea Fury incident last year, Chris – who was awarded the Air Force Cross for exemplary airmanship and courage for his actions on the last day of July 2014 – was full of admiration for the rugged build of the aircraft and engine.

"Once it went wrong, that engine had no right to keep going as long as it did," he said.

But another iconic Naval aircraft did take to the skies in the shape of the Fairey Swordfish City of Leeds.

Built in 1941 and now painted in the colours of 820 NAS at the time the squadron crippled German battleship Bismarck in May 1941,

the Swordfish was, said Chris, a classic example of the Royal Navy making the most of what was available.

Already obsolete by the outbreak of war, the aircraft – a tangle of wires, fabric-covered wings and a rudimentary fuselage with an open cockpit – went on to prove its mettle in a number of roles.

It could be adapted to carry a range of weapons, and its agility and stability went a long way towards compensating for its painfully-slow progress – "imagine flying this against Bismarck at slightly more than the speed of a car on a motorway," said Chris.

"It is a great aircraft to fly because it handles so nicely."

Among the many admirers of the 'Stringbag' at Culdrose was 94-year-old Lt RNVR(A) Freddie Harsant, believed to be the oldest-surviving Swordfish Observer.

Freddie visited the air station the day before the show, and regaled members of the media and Service personnel – including Air Day

Swordfish pilot Lt Simon Wilson – with tales of his war service.

Among the dits was his time as Flight Commander of a Walrus seaplane on HMS Edinburgh when the cruiser, carrying Russian gold as payment for war supplies, was sunk in the Barents Sea in May 1942.

Freddie, who has written books about his experiences, was Officer of the Watch when the ship was attacked by U-boats – having only formally qualified that morning.

Before the war Freddie had planned to walk across Africa from the Med to the Cape, but he said the war intervened and provided more adventures than he could ever have imagined.

Although his sight is failing, Freddie said he recognised the shape of the old biplane when he went out onto the airfield.

● (Left, from top) The Royal Navy's Black Cats display team; PO Simon Baker sees an opportunity to share an ice-cream; Capt 'Teddy' Meister during his award-winning display in the Swiss Air Force F/A-18C Hornet; a close-formation turn by nine of the Frecce Tricolori team



● (Left and top of page) Aircraft of the Italian flag; (above and main image) the Polish Mig Navy Wildcat

Pictures: PO(Phot) Paul A

s and Euro stars



● (Above) A Royal Navy Merlin airborne beyond the Polish and Swiss contingents; (right) the Sea Kings of 771 Naval Air Squadron form up in the Air Day Balbo – a large formation of aircraft

"The Swordfish is absolutely lovely," he said.

"No one who flew in it had a bad word to say about the aircraft – they were very popular.

"They were very stable and were marvellously manoeuvrable."

Other vintage warbirds included a Seafire ("which is what every Spitfire wants to be..." observed Chris Götke during a stint in the commentary box), a Curtiss P-40 Kittyhawk, a Chance Vought Corsair, a Douglas Skyraider and a Hawker Hunter.

The Black Cats display team, featuring two RN Wildcats, and the RAF's Boeing HC4 Chinook display team from 27 Sqn showed off the astonishing capabilities of modern military helicopters, while civilian groups such as Wildcat Aerobatics, Muscle Biplane (a single-seat version of the classic Pitts Special)

and the Blades Aerobatic Display Team kept interest high throughout a flying programme that lasted more than five hours.

Culdrose 2015 saw the final public display by the distinctive red and grey Sea Kings of 771 NAS – the search and rescue unit will have been consigned to history by the time of Culdrose 2016, although as the CO of the base, Capt Ade Orchard, pointed out, Culdrose is far more than just a SAR base.

That point was reinforced by the participation of grey Merlin helicopters, based on the establishment, and a display by Sea Harriers, the whine of Pegasus engines bringing a nostalgic note to proceedings as three jump jets – no longer able to fly – paraded up and down the runway.

Both aircraft types indicated the crucial role Culdrose has to play in the support of the new Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers – the base regards itself as a 'carrier on land' as it covers everything from the training of flight-deck

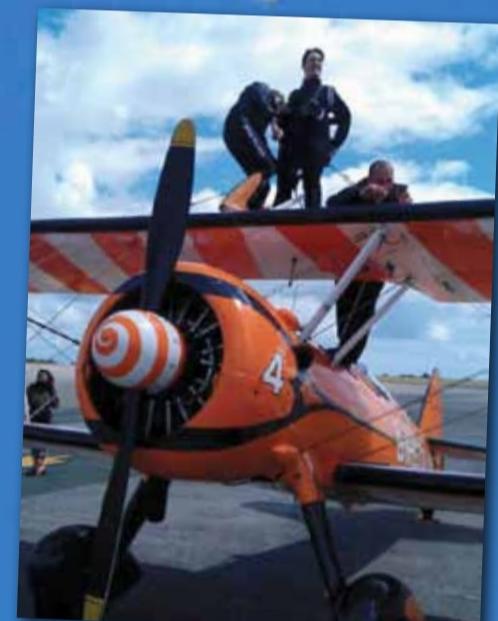
teams (using the earthbound Harriers) to acting as the home to anti-submarine Merlins.

The five-hour flying display was not the only attraction as visitors took the opportunity to take a close look at aircraft old and new, ranging from the veteran Chipmunk trainer to the new Wildcat – the Gazelle team won the Air Day prize for best static display.

Military displays, food stalls, trade stands and fairground attractions completed the picture, keeping the crowds occupied before and after the flying displays.

The aerial grand finale was enacted by the majestic de Havilland Sea Vixen, presented to the Fly Navy Heritage Trust at Yeovilton a year ago and the only example of the Royal Navy's 1960s all-weather fighter still flying today.

With no Vulcan in the air over Culdrose – and the end of that Cold War warrior's flying career looming – the distinctive Sea Vixen, with its twin-boom tail and swept wings, could go some way towards filling the big gap left by the exit of the delta-winged V-bomber.



Above and beyond the call of duty

YOU would have been hard-pressed to have missed the publicity for Culdrose Air Day – the public relations team at the Royal Navy's Cornish air base worked their socks off to ensure the message got out.

But you can never be too sure, so station PRO Emma Relton took to the skies for a final flourish the day before the show, making the news herself in the process.

Emma was invited to strap herself into the harness on the top wing of a Boeing Stearman biplane, one half of the Breitling Wingwalkers aerobatic formation display team (above).

And off she went for a ten-minute spin – well, more of a barrel-roll than a spin, as she experienced a shorter, gentler version of the routine which thrilled the crowds the following day.

The occasion was filmed by the BBC, and proved a popular feature on their *Spotlight* evening programme as well as on Facebook.

Emma said she was surprised at the strength of the slipstream during the flight – it was hard work just to wave, she said, which demonstrated the strength and skill displayed by the team's two regulars, Nikita and Emily.

Emma's daughter Scarlette had the last word on the adventure: "She's bananas..."



In Frecce Tricolori take off and fly the Italian MiG-29 is put through its paces; (right) a Royal

Barrow (RNAS Culdrose)

Spread the word

EACH week snippets of amazing fundraising achievements and successful grant applications land in my email inbox. It's fantastic motivation knowing how much people care for our cause and choose to do something in return, as well as discovering the benefits our grants bring to the lives of serving and former personnel first-hand.

Where fundraisers often struggle however, is in trying to promote their cause and get maximum attention for it.

For serving personnel, it's easy to get the word out amongst your ship, unit and colleagues to support your challenge. Your PROs (Public Relations Officers) are a great start, as they've got connections to local newspapers and photographers to really help sell your story or promote it around your deployment.

For all fundraisers – your friends and family represent a great word-of-mouth network that are likely to share your enthusiasm for raising money for good causes, so perhaps they'll promote it in their workplace using a poster? Facebook and Twitter are effective platforms on which to share news of your challenge, your stories and photos progress, as well as your Virgin Money Giving fundraising page link.

For bigger challenges it might be necessary to set up whole social media pages – or even websites – in addition to getting some dedicated fundraising kit.

Whether large or small, if you have a fantastic fundraising challenge to shout about – or if you've benefited first-hand from the work of the charity – then we want to hear from you!

It's through our beneficiaries and supporters that we are able to spread news of our work and encourage others to get involved in requesting grants from, or raising money for, the charity.

You can email us at mystery@rnrmc.org.uk to send us stories and photos, and you can download info and (low-res) logos to promote the charity at bit.ly/RNRMCMediakit.

Finally, you can connect with us on social media by searching for us on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn and YouTube.

*Chris Taylor
Communications Officer
The Royal Navy and Royal
Marines Charity*

FUNDRAISER OF THE MONTH

HMS Excellent 24-hour sailing team



THANK you to members of the Royal Navy Sailing Centre who completed a 24-hour sailathon, raising over £1,200 for RNRM.

The event, organised by Lee Bichard, a sailing instructor at the RNSC

Rangers announce new partnership

RANGERS Charity Foundation – bound with the world-famous Glaswegian football team – is partnering with four Services-related charities for the 2015-16 season, maintaining its proud and long-standing relationship with the Armed Forces and associated charities.

With the backing of the club and the fans, the club is aiming to raise £25,000 to be split between ABF The Soldiers' Charity, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, the RAF Benevolent Fund (£5,000 each) and

veterans charity Erskine (£10,000).

Connal Cochrane, manager of the Foundation, said: "We have a strong tradition of helping Services-related charities, having worked in partnership in the past with both Erskine and ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

"The Foundation has also supported SSAFA and Erskine via our Fans Forces Fund and regularly assists a range of other organisations, from Help For Heroes to Combat Stress, in other ways, such as

donating tickets and signed memorabilia and organising match day can collections.

"I'm sure everyone in the Rangers family will once again back our efforts every step of the way."

Erskine is marking its centenary by creating a garden in memory of those who died in the world wars and subsequent conflicts, bringing together three existing sites by creating a paved walkway winding through woodland filled with trees, shrubs and wild flowers.

News in brief

HMS NEPTUNE'S Special Needs Support Group will host an autism workshop event (following a successful bid for RNRM funding) from 9.30am-2.30pm, September 16, at the Braeholm Centre, Helensburgh.

HIGH stakes – on Monday September 7, philanthropists, adventurers and entrepreneurs will abseil 1,916ft (the equivalent of 142 double-decker buses) down three iconic London landmarks in aid of the Outbound Trust and RNRM.

They will abseil 30 St Mary Axe ('The Gherkin'), pictured above, the Leadenhall Building ('the Cheesegrater') and 20 Fenchurch Street ('the Walkie Talkie').

GOOD luck to HMS Argyll's WO1 Tim Hamlyn, who is running 12 marathons in 12 days around the Cornish coastline: uk.virginmoneygiving.com/TimothyHamlyn

CONGRATULATIONS to teams from FOST(S) and HMS Temeraire, who both cycled the 940-mile route from Land's End to John O'Groats, raising over £2,800.

Call for change

A MAJOR investigation into the care of Britain's amputee war veterans has called for a radical re-structuring of health services.

Service veterans who have suffered terrible injuries while on duty are experiencing variable standards of care which are hampering recoveries and adding a needless burden on the NHS.

The White Report – the most detailed study of how the nation's 160 operationally most complex wounded men are treated – found failings across the NHS and called for a fresh approach to their care.

The report was commissioned by the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund (RMCTF) alongside Blesma, the limbless veterans' charity, and compiled by former RM Capt Jon White, who was injured by an improvised explosive device on Operation Herrick 12 in Afghanistan in 2010.

He lost both legs above the knee and his right arm at the elbow, and has benefited from prosthetics fitted in the United States funded by RMCTF.

He interviewed fellow veterans, clinicians and administrators to discover patchy provision of

medical facilities and support networks.

"These are young, fit, determined former Forces personnel with huge potential for society, yet they can experience daily frustration, delay and complications on a needlessly lengthy medical journey," he said.

"The aim of the report is to help the government create the conditions to allow the potential of our injured Service personnel to shine."

It signposts the route to better, more lasting therapy, freedom of choice and can even save funds for the NHS, he added.

Establishing the recommendations of the Murrison Report published in 2011, which led to nine regional centres of excellence for prosthetic services funded by a £6.7m government grant helped, but White believes combining their services with the expertise offered by the Hanger company in Oklahoma, US, can elevate results and make the UK a world leader in prosthetic care.

"My recommendations will help veterans return to independence as wage earners, taxpayers and to raise families, released from the psychological and physical burden

of sub-optimal care," Jon added.

Jonathan Ball, chief executive of RMCTF, which has funded trans-femoral amputees for prosthetic treatment in the US over the past two years at over £90,000 each, said: "Jon embodies the commando mindset – first to understand, first to adapt and respond; and the first to overcome.

"Not only has he overcome his own injuries and become a father and professional project manager, but he has drawn on his skills as a Royal Marines officer to produce his report on behalf of his comrades."

Barry Le Grys, chief executive of Blesma, which has been instrumental in the welfare of amputee veterans for a century, added: "Jon is uniquely placed to examine and assess services. His report is deeply significant and

deserves thorough attention so we properly support people who have sacrificed so much for their country.

"We have been concerned for some time that NHS services were patchy and that veterans had, at times, a tough job navigating their way through the system with the delays and frustrations adding to the difficult physical and psychological task of rehabilitation.

"This is the first report of its kind because it gets to the root of the problems and tells some harsh truths about how we are dealing with veterans. There is much that is good in the NHS but improvements can be made and the White Report shows how we can develop a treatment programme that is fit for veterans and civilians alike."



Red, White & Blue Day 2015 commemorates the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain

In the summer of 1940, during WWII, nearly two million children were evacuated from their homes as war broke out and British and German airplanes fought overhead in the Battle of Britain.

Red, White & Blue Day (Friday 9th October 2015) will join in the 75th anniversary commemorations with special events and materials to educate children about the Battle of Britain and honour the contributions of the British Armed Forces, service personnel and their families. We encourage students to wear red, white and blue clothing on the day and donate £1 each to support service families. Participating schools will receive a range of educational material.

To register your school visit:

redwhiteblueday.co.uk

To donate £3 text RWB3 to 70030 or to send £10 text RWB10 to 70030.
#RWBDay



All money raised will support the three leading military welfare charities.



SUPPORTING EVERY MEMBER OF THE MILITARY FAMILY

Handing out the cash

REPRESENTATIVES from local and Naval charities attended a reception at HMS Collingwood to receive a donation from money raised during the establishment's open day in June.

The charities which benefited were: The Rainbow Centre, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, HMS Collingwood Volunteer Cadet Corps, Warsash Sea Cadets, HMS Collingwood Volunteer Cadet Corps, Army Cadets and Gosport and Fareham Inshore Rescue Service (GAFIRS).

A donation of £1,000 was also given to Cpl John Stanley and Pte Chiran Kala, of HMS Collingwood, who are currently raising money to purchase goods to send to Nepal where some of the MPGS personnel at the Fareham base are originally from.

They are supporting HOPAD (Helpless, Orphan, Poor, Affected and Dalits), Child & Women Promotion Society.

■ NAOMI House and Jack's Place received a donation of £520 from two sailors from HMS Collingwood following a marathon walk they did from Salisbury to Winchester.

CPOs Stu Young and Al Gower from the Weapon Engineering Training Group took part in the Clarendon Way Walk; a 26-miler across Wiltshire.

The sailors wanted to express gratitude for the palliative care that Al's son (Stu's nephew), Joe, five, received before he passed away in 2013.

This was the second time they have had taken part in the walk but this year they were joined by family and friends including Al's brother, CPO Mark Gower who is currently based at HMS Excellent.

Brother's memory

PERSONNEL at HMS Nelson Learning and Development Centre are holding a cycle marathon in memory of a colleague's brother.

Lt Sarah Vines has set up a charity in memory of her brother who lost his battle against cancer at the age of 22.

Now his sister and her colleagues are holding a 24-hour charity cycle in the arena next to HMS Victory in Portsmouth Naval Base.

The event will take place from Friday September 4 to Saturday September 5.

For details about the new Neil Vines Trust visit www.neilvines.com



Pictures: POA(Phot) Owen Cooban

Crew complete challenge

FIFTEEN sailors from the Royal Navy's future flagship, HMS Queen Elizabeth, have cycled from Edinburgh to London where they were met by the model Jodie Kidd and First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas, pictured right.

Joined by five of their industry partners from the Aircraft Carrier Alliance, the 20-strong cycle team set off from Edinburgh Castle and after covering 500 miles in just five days, were cheered across the finish line outside London's Guildhall.

In what has been their biggest challenge to date,

the team has been raising funds along the way in support of Naval charities, including the RNRMC.

The Lord Mayor of London Alderman Alan Yarrow welcomed the team to the city of London and presented them with their medals.

Team captain, PO Michael 'Mini' Cooper, 38, said: "This was a fantastic event for the ship and we were delighted to be undertaking it with our friends from industry."

"It was always going to be tough but we trained hard and it was all for a great cause."



To Russia with love for Navy grandad

A HEALTH worker is cycling more than 2,000 miles to raise funds for charity and in memory of his grandfather, a veteran of the Arctic Convoys.

Gavin Tiffin, hospitality manager at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust in London, is taking part in the London to St Petersburg ride, taking in ten countries and averaging 100 miles a day over three weeks.

The Cultural Cycle event is in tribute to veterans of the

Arctic Convoys and Mr Tiffin's grandfather Rodney Pearson Tiffin, who was a Royal Navy engineer aboard HMS Blankney, a Hunt-class destroyer which escorted Arctic Convoys in 1942.

Mr Tiffin, whose wife Anna hails from Russia, wants to use the ride to raise awareness of how music and the arts can improve people's lives.

He said: "Music and art are used to make the hospital environments a more pleasant place to be in, they help people pass this time and they are also used in the recovery of patients.

They bring joy and comfort during dark and hard times."

He is no stranger to long fundraising trips.

In 2013 he cycled solo 400 miles from London to Paris in three days before competing in the Paris marathon and in subsequent weekends, marathons in Vienna, London and Madrid.

Last year Mr Tiffin took part in the Biel Ultramarathon, a 100km night race in Switzerland.

"This year we mark 70 years since VE Day and I will take this opportunity to remember some

of the brave people who served to protect us all those years ago.

"My grandfather was recently awarded his Arctic Star and it is my way to pay tribute to the man I never had the honour of meeting."

Three charities will benefit from Mr Tiffin's efforts – Evelina London Children's Hospital, Medicinema and Breathe Arts Health Research through Guy's and St Thomas' Charity.

Anyone wishing to donate should visit <http://www.victorydaylondon.co.uk> and click on The Cultural Cycle link.



● Mick Daniels

Running for his comrades

FORMER Royal Navy AB Mick Daniels wore a precious lifejacket as he took part in the Pottery Marathon.

Mick last wore the lifejacket when he prepared to abandon ship during the Falklands conflict.

He was aboard HMS Coventry when she was sunk on May 25 1982.

The 53-year-old completed the marathon to raise funds for Combat Stress.

"I found out a former shipmate of mine had committed suicide and another two died of alcohol-related issues," he said.

"After the Falklands we were just told not to talk about it. The support you get in the Armed Forces is far better now."

Mick wore number 118 for the marathon – the same pennant number as his ship.

Mick's wife Rachel said: "He lost a lot of friends when he was on the Coventry. We go to the anniversary every year and you can see some of them are still suffering even now. People doing stuff like this means they'll never be forgotten."

Jo Grace, head of volunteering and regional fund-raising at Combat Stress, said: "We're very grateful to Mick for his efforts."

To sponsor Mick visit www.justgiving.com/lifejacket

Sailors to help out

PERSONNEL from HMS Sultan will once again be helping to launch this year's Poppy Appeal fundraiser.

The Royal British Legion's London Poppy Day takes place on October 29 and last year raised £1.25m in 12 hours.

POAET(AV) Steve Munday, who works at the Gosport base, said: "Having been involved in London Poppy Day since 2012, I can say in all honesty that it is my favourite day of the year and something I look forward to immensely."



In at the deep end

ROYAL Navy divers are planning an underwater marathon – wearing full diving kit – to raise funds for charity.

Divers from the Fleet Diving Squadron at HMS Excellent will complete the marathon at Horsea Island over 30 hours.

In relay, two divers will walk the 1km length of the island wearing lead-lined boots, helmet and breathing apparatus, pictured left.

As if that's not enough, they will pull a support boat carrying three personnel and extra kit.

The group will complete the 42.2 legs in early September to raise funds for Naval charities.

To donate visit: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fleetdivingunit1>

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Homeport magazine is the Naval Family Federation's free pick-up, take-home, information-packed quarterly read and we want to make it even better.

Whether you're a young sailor just starting your exciting career in the Royal Navy or a 'salty old sea dog' whose family has waved you off and welcomed you home more times than they can count, we want your views and comments.

Do you want a section for dads? Or one for children? Do you want a 'this has just been announced' section? Do you want a 'Postbag' feature? Whatever your bright idea is we want to hear about it.

The new-look *Homeport* is due to hit the streets in our winter issue, so whatever your thoughts are then please e-mail them to us: editor@NFF.org.uk and we could be crediting you with the bright idea for a fresh feel to the magazine.

All respondents will be entered into a draw to receive a voucher with the winner being picked at the end of September.

For general NFF inquiries, call 02392 654374 or email admin@NFF.org.uk

Education is the key to success Learning leaders

THE first Naval Learning Awards Ceremony – which aims to recognise those who have committed to developing their education – has been held at HMS Collingwood.

More than 60 people attended a celebration dinner in the wardroom where the awards were presented by Cdre Steve Dainton CBE, Assistant Chief of Staff Training.

The Elective Learning Annual Awards celebrate the success of Naval Service personnel (including RN, RM, Reservists and RFA) who have chosen to engage in learning to improve and develop themselves or others.

The winners were:

Most Inspiring Achievement in Elective Learning: CPO Garry Young, HMS Sultan. He joined the Royal Navy with few qualifications, completed his GCSEs, honours degree, masters degree and is about to start a PhD. He has worked as a part-time Service instructor for the past five years, teaching English and business studies, with a pass rate of more than 90 percent.

Use of Elective Learning to benefit the Workplace: CPO(ETWE) Simon Howlett. He organised three engineering projects to develop ETs onboard HMS Argyll. He enabled the ETs to develop technical and leadership skills and gave them a sense of ownership as they develop to LH.

Top Achiever in the Elective Learner Domain JR/ OR/ JNCO: LReg Shadale Jamal La Bordem, HMS Iron Duke. Shadale completed a BSc (Hons) Psychology after six years of study, despite having to defer twice due to Service needs.



● CPO Garry Young, LReg Shadale Jamal La Bordem and Lt Paul Reilly



Top Achiever in the Elective Learner Domain SR/ SNCO/ WO: CPO(CIS(SM)) Paul Henderson. He recently completed an NVQ5 in Management, a Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Management, 300 points towards a BA Honours degree in history and an MSc in Leadership and Management, where he studied occupational stress management in relation to working patterns within the Submarine Service.

Top Achiever in the Elective Learner Domain: Officer: Lt Paul Reilly. He joined the Navy in 1986 as a weapon engineer mechanic with one CSE. He has recently been awarded an MSc with distinction from Portsmouth University and he next intends to study for a PhD in philosophy of the human mind and consciousness.

Elective Learning Best Unit of the Year: HMS Dragon. A vibrant

training culture, with well-established development opportunities underpinned by a formalised CLM process designed to provide personnel with the opportunity to become better leaders.

ERO of the Year: PO(Wtr) Darragh Shannon. Over the past 12 months, he has taught both A-Level English and history onboard. Twenty-plus of his crewmates have benefited directly from his support in becoming eligible for promotion and his efforts have reduced what was a significant education shortfall in HMS Talent. He is a role model to others, having worked hard to achieve a BA (Hons) and MA (Hons) and is currently studying for an MBA.

More details on taking your career further through elective learning can be obtained from your ERO onboard, the NETS Ops team or Learning & Development Centres in all shore bases.

UTCs the day with your feedback

YOU often see in these pages the extensive contribution our skilled and motivated engineering technicians and officers give to today's Royal Navy.

Like the rest of the nation, however, our demand for engineers continues to outstrip the supply, with an insufficient number of young people choosing engineering as a vocation.

One of the measures expected to address this is the creation of University Technical Colleges (UTCs). A new type of school, sponsored by local businesses and universities, UTCs offer students from years 10 – 13 (ages 14-19), a completely different approach to a science and technology-focussed education.

The Royal Navy is one of the key partners setting up UTC Portsmouth, which opens in September 2017, through a project team headed by Capt Andy Cree.

Specialising in electrical and mechanical engineering and advanced manufacturing, UTC Portsmouth will combine academic GCSE and A-Level subjects with vocational courses and a range of enrichment activities.

There will be a strong emphasis on project-related learning while the school environment will replicate the world of work: students will wear business dress, work a longer day (8.30am to 5pm) and interact with the supporting partners, including BAE Systems, DSTL and QinetiQ, in all areas of their study.

The school will be next to Trafalgar School (formerly City of Portsmouth Boys School) at Hilsea, Portsmouth.

It will accept applications from a vast catchment area, including Southampton, the Isle of Wight and Chichester as well as Portsmouth itself.

The admissions policy will prioritise children in Service families.

With two years to go before UTC Portsmouth opens, plans are still in the relatively early stages although the rate of progress is gathering pace. The design and build contract is now out for tender and the school principal post will be advertised this month.

The Royal Navy-led project team are keen to hear your views on this innovative school and are holding a consultation in September and October.

To find out more about UTC Portsmouth and give your views, visit the website: www.utcporsmouth.org where you can find details of the four planned open events, register for further information, or fill in the questionnaire online.

They also have a Facebook page and can be found on Twitter @UTCPorstmouth.

Can WE fix it? Yes WE can

THE 'AA' of the Navy's computer and IT world are marking two years of meeting the hi-tech needs of the Fleet and Royal Marines.

The Maritime C5ISR Support Unit (or Maritime Command Control Computers Communications Coalition Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Support Unit to fully spell it out) – thankfully shortened to MCSU – is the 'cradle to grave' (more accurately shelf to skip) service for acquiring, installing, maintaining and finally disposing of the RN's information systems.

The unit was formed in 2013, merging various IT teams and organisations – the Fleet Information Management Unit, Fleet CIS Support Unit, the N6 ISS procurement team at Navy Command, the Command Radio Pool and RFA Electronic Support Group – bringing them under one roof on Portsdown Hill in Portsmouth, a process which took more than half a decade.

It provides support for all IT systems used by the RN and RM with the exception of DII (the MOD's administration/internet/email network).

That means around 250 different computer and computerised systems – such as DNA (the brains on Type 23 which meshes the information from all the frigate's combat sensors and turns it into something the ship's company can understand) and Bowman radios.

"People are getting a much better service from us than they were a couple of years ago under the old system," said PO Gary Threapleton, who's been involved with the unit in various guises for seven years on and off.



● Tents time in the field... A Royal Marine from MCSU flashes up his laptop in the field

complex repairs.

"We're expected to move at 24 hours' notice – and we've always got someone on the go: Virginia Beach, Gibraltar, Bahrain, the Falklands. On a typical day, half the people are out of the office," said Gary.

"Sometimes you'll fly out and find the problem isn't the one you were expecting – or it's a very simple one which the ship's crew could have fixed."

The unit is responsible for acquiring shiny new pieces of kit... and getting rid of clunky old bits (the Navy rid itself of 15,000 items over the past 12 months).

You can get hold of the team at two snappy DII addresses – **NAVY-IS-MCSU SYSS SVC DSK (MULTIUSER)** and **DES DIST-DSG Incident Team (MULTIUSER)** – or by calling 93821 2054 8am-4pm Monday-Friday and 9360 57631 out of hours.

Goodbye MDHUs, hello DMGs

THE MOD's Hospital Units – military medical and surgical staff serving in NHS establishment such as Queen Alexandra (Portsmouth) and Derriford (Plymouth) – are now Defence Medical Groups as part of a wider reshuffle of the Defence Medical Services.

Like the MDHUs before them, the new Defence Medical Groups – the one in Portsmouth, where military comprise five per cent of QA's

staff, for example is DMG South – are focused on providing front-line formations with suitably-qualified healthcare personnel for operations.

However, the Military Administration Cell (MPAC) component of the old MDHUs has been disbanded, and administration of military patients is now co-ordinated directly between the military primary care provider and the relevant NHS hospital.



WELFARE

Your WelComE account card...

A WelComE account card is assigned to you for your entire military career and can be used to access telephone and Internet services whilst deployed.

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PROJECT FIREFLY

**Seamless Transfer From Regular
To Maritime Reserves**

If you are leaving the service and apply to transfer before your Terminal Date, under **PROJECT FIREFLY** you could take full advantage to move from Regular to Maritime Reserves by using the "Seamless Transfer Scheme". **More information can be found in 2014DIN 01 – 130.**



THE MARITIME RESERVES – are a force of highly trained civilian volunteers who are readily available to support any of the Royal Navy's wide ranging operational commitments.

The rewards for completing the minimum commitment which is either 24 days RNR or 26 days RMR include:

- Excellent rates of pay
- A generous tax free bounty
- Pension
- The added benefit of a 2 year harmony period
- Remain part of Naval Family with its special camaraderie

FOR MORE INFORMATION
call 023 92628677 or e-mail navpers-restpa@mod.uk

THE JOURNEY DOES NOT HAVE TO END!





● LC Dent receives his award from Cdr Fi Shepherd

Passing on his skills

A ROYAL Navy chef who gave up his time to pass on his cookery skills to young people in Plymouth has been commended by his Commanding Officer.

LC Chris Dent teamed up with Plymouth City Council's youth services team to deliver an eight-week evening class in cookery and life-skills to five young people, the first of its kind in the city.

The 27-year-old, who works as an instructor at the Defence Maritime Logistics School within HMS Raleigh, designed and delivered the course.

The project culminated in a buffet celebration cooked by the young people for invited guests.

Each of the budding chefs was presented with a certificate by John Miller, Head of Youth Services at Plymouth City Council, and Cdr Fi Shepherd, the Commandant of DMLS. Cdr Shepherd also presented LC Dent with a commendation signed by the CO of HMS Raleigh Capt Rob Bellfield.

LC Dent, who joined the Royal Navy in 2005, said: "The course has been everything I wanted it to be – the past eight weeks have been a real pleasure."

Open day a success

MORE than 3,000 visitors jumped at the chance to look around Britannia Royal Naval College during its open day.

Highlights for the visitors included a field gun run, the chance to look inside a Royal Navy helicopter, and performances by the Band of HM Royal Marines Plymouth.

Members of the public were also invited to look inside the impressive college building designed by Sir Aston Webb.

In the Britannia Museum visitors were able to take a look at the collection which includes artefacts illustrating BRNC's longstanding Royal connections. Generations of the Royal family have trained at Dartmouth, including King George VI, the Queen's father, whose dress uniform is on display.

Digging deep

AIR Engineering Technicians from HMS Sultan took on some ground-breaking challenges at Rowner Junior School, Gosport.

The group, who are all studying within the Defence College of Technical Training's Royal Naval Air Engineering and Survival Equipment School, completed a number of tasks in order to help improve outdoor facilities, including building a tool shed and creating a vegetable patch.

AET Alistair Darby-Hadley, 23, said: "It's been a lot of hard work, but I think it's brilliant to get involved with the community."



● AB(C) Keith Roberts qualified as a chef and graduated from Liverpool University with a PhD in Politics



New recruit graduates twice in two weeks Keith cooks up a storm

A ROYAL Navy recruit from Merseyside is celebrating the end of what he describes as the 'most rewarding two weeks of his life.'

AB Chef Keith Roberts joined the Royal Navy last November after four years as a member of the Royal Naval Reserve.

Because of his previous experience he was allowed to forego basic training and go directly on to his specialist course to become a chef.

Keith has been learning his trade at the Defence Maritime Logistics School based at HMS Raleigh.

His memorable two weeks started with his end-of-course project when he and classmates cooked a six-course meal for their families.

Five days later he graduated from Liverpool University with a PhD in Politics and then three days after that he stood proudly on the parade ground at HMS Raleigh to celebrate his qualification as a chef.

The 26-year-old said: "This has been the most rewarding two weeks of my life and to cap it all I also received a tax rebate."

"I was making an omelette one day and thought I could do this for a living. I

needed a new challenge and a break from academia. I've been in education for over 20 consecutive years. I've had a hunger to join the Royal Navy for a number of years."

The former pupil of Litherland High School graduated from Liverpool University with a politics degree in 2010, achieving the highest mark for a dissertation that his professor had awarded in 15 years.

He was offered the chance to skip a Masters and study directly for a PhD and was one of three people given a John Lennon Memorial Scholarship, funded by Yoko Ono, which paid for his tuition fees and living costs.

He said: "In my first year as a student I wanted to leave. I was in the Air Training Corps as a kid and went to the RAF careers office, but I decided the RAF wasn't for me and neither was the Army. The Royal Navy though offered the world and lots of different opportunities.

"I eventually decided that I may regret leaving Uni so decided to carry on. When I found out about the RNR in Liverpool it was a no-brainer for me, so I joined HMS Eaglet, the local unit."

Keith signed up as a mine warfare specialist in the RNR. He was mobilised

as part of the military support to the Olympic Games in London and also spent two weeks deployed on the mine countermeasures vessel HMS Pembroke.

Keith said: "Doing the security for the Olympics allowed me to gain some more qualifications and being in the RNR made me want to do it all full-time.

"I completed my PhD, handed in my first draft and even though I was doing a bit of a dream job working for Everton FC, in the ticket office, the allure of the Senior Service was too much to resist.

"So I went from Everton and an office at Liverpool University to sleeping in a room with seven others and learning how to cook by day. I think I made the right decision.

"I like cooking, but my knowledge was based on what my nan told me and watching the *Hairy Bikers* on telly.

"I got to Raleigh and it was completely different from what I was used to. The pace of learning is a lot faster and it's been hard.

"I was training alongside a lot of people who were already chefs and there I was a complete novice, but I'm one of three out of nine who went through without having to re-sit any of the exams."

Juggling the preparations for his new

career with making his final amendments to his PhD was also a challenge, which required intervention from his Naval instructors.

He said: "The Navy has been so supportive. At one point I was trying to do my chef training by day, evenings were taken up with preparing for rounds and cleaning, and there was also sport and all the other things the Navy throws at you.

"In addition I was trying to do my amendments and at one point I wasn't getting any sleep, so my instructor arranged for me to come out of chef training for a month to concentrate on my PhD.

"I was also given special leave to attend my graduation back home in Liverpool.

"My horizons have been opened massively by the Royal Navy. There are a range of opportunities now open to me."

Having finished his chef training, Keith has opted to become a submariner and his next goal is to learn how to operate beneath the waves.

This autumn he will report to HMNB Clyde in Scotland, where he will begin the next stage of his training to qualify as a member of the Silent Service.

There are also plans for Keith's PhD thesis to be published next year.



● Cdr Darren Cartwright, Lt Paul Robertson, Mid Jake Robertson and Capt Colin Miller at Jake's passing out from BRNC

Mad Max on ropes

HOLLYWOOD actor Tom Hardy, who most recently starred in *Mad Max*, visited Arbroath to take part in some of the training that 45 Commando Group conduct.

Hardy is an honorary member of the Royal Marines Corps and was invited to RM Condor to take part in a series of physical challenges where he got a full demonstration of the weapons systems that 45 Cdo have at their disposal.

He also toured Woodlands Garden, a site of remembrance, to honour all those that have died while serving at 45 Cdo since 1971. Hardy visited nearby Barry Buddon Training Area at which he was able to gain some hands-on experience with the unit's sniper rifle before being presented with a wooden replica Fairbairn-Sykes Commando Dagger on his departure.

Sgt Kev Bowie, the unit's PTI, said: "The mighty-45 have put him through his paces; he understands our ethos and Corps values and has an insight into what is required to wear the coveted Green Beret."



● Submariners from the Faslane Flotilla during Divisions

New man at helm

REAR Admiral John Weale was officially appointed as Scotland's senior Naval officer during a ceremony at HM Naval Base Clyde.

In addition to taking up his post as Flag Officer Scotland and Northern Ireland, Rear Admiral Weale also assumes command as Assistant Chief of Staff Submarines (ACNS SM).

Admiral Weale took over the role of FOSNI from Rear Admiral John Clink, who is moving to a new role in the Navy as Flag Officer Sea Training.

To commemorate the occasion, over 100 submariners from the Faslane Flotilla performed Divisions, a long-standing tradition in the Royal Navy which is designed to demonstrate drill and instils discipline, obedience, smart appearance and confidence, and is often seen at ceremonial occasions.

The Admiral was welcomed to Faslane by the Naval Base Commander, Cdre Mark Adams, and toured a number of facilities at the base.

A family affair

THREE serving Royal Naval officers watched with pride as Mid Jake Robertson passed out from Britannia Royal Naval College.

Jake was watched by his father Lt Paul Robertson, uncle Cdr Darren Cartwright and godfather Capt Colin Miller as he took the salute from Vice Admiral Ian Corder.

He was among 122 cadets to pass out following 30 weeks of arduous and challenging training.

Mid Richard Fulton, 25, from Lee-on-the-Solent, was one of

Air miles celebrations for veteran Navy duo

BETWEEN them they have been in the air for 17,000 hours – the equivalent of 708.33 days or nearly two years.

Lt Cdr Andrew 'Tank' Murray has notched up 8,000 hours, while CPO Andy Vanes is celebrating his 9,000th flying-hours milestone.

Having joined the Royal Navy in 1986, 'Tank' gained his Wings in September 1988 and in under a year was flying on the front line with 814 NAS.

He has flown most of the Royal Navy's aircraft during his career, including Gazelles, Chipmunks and Bulldogs but it is the 'venerable Sea King' that has proved to be his most loved aircraft.

He currently flies with 771 NAS Search and Rescue squadron at RNAS Culdrose.

CPO Vanes joined the Royal Navy in 1970 as a chef before transferring to the aircrewman branch in 1977.

He has flown most of the Royal Navy rotary aircraft, including the Wessex, Wasp, Sea King and the fixed-wing Jetstream in a variety of roles. He has also served in HM Ships Naiad, Ashanti, Euryalus and Illustrious.

CPO Vanes, Chief Aircrewman at Yeovilton-based 825 NAS – the Wildcat squadron – passed 9,000 hours aboard a Swordfish somewhere near Carlisle en route to an air show in Edinburgh – he regularly flies in the Royal Navy's newest and oldest aircraft.

He would be interested to know if any Naval aircrews have also reached that mark – let us know here at *Navy News* if you have.

He left the regular RN in 1993 after 22 years but joined the RNVR the following year.

As a civilian he spent a year working with AgustaWestland in Italy, all the while maintaining



● CPO Andy Vanes in the back of a Wildcat with 825 NAS

his Reserves status.

CPO Vanes' career path is not unique – a friend went from chef to Navy pilot to Virgin Atlantic pilot: "You can go all the way," he said.

And as you would expect with an aviator, there have been downs as well as ups.

"One memorable occasion was ditching with an admiral in a Wessex 5 off Portland," he said.

"There was a problem, so the pilot took it into a low hover over Weymouth Bay and requested we leave the aircraft.

"The admiral had a bit of a dither so we gave him a helping hand – he took it very well."

Among the highlights was taking his place on the lead Sea King for the Queen's Colours flypast at Yeovilton in 1991.

Lt Cdr Murray, who was

awarded the Air Force Cross for his bravery during a dramatic rescue in the Scottish Highlands, has been on operational front line service in Iraq, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan.

"I've had some great fun over the years notching up 8,000 hours. Obviously, there have been some tough and demanding flights, but being able to rescue people or make a difference in areas of conflict is very satisfying.

"I have flown over 360 rescues. The most memorable and challenging ones were Boscastle in North Cornwall, a place called Crinkle Gill in the Lake District and an avalanche on Buchaille Etive Mor in Scotland where I was awarded my AFC.

"The admiral had a bit of a dither so we gave him a helping hand – he took it very well."

"The admiral had a bit of a dither so we gave him a helping hand – he took it very well."

"I wouldn't change it for the world and look forward to getting a few more hours under my belt."



● Lt Cdr Andrew 'Tank' Murray returns from a training flight



● Mscn Aaron Cousins with Eric Greenleaf

Veteran presents award

A 95-YEAR-OLD veteran of the Arctic Convoys has presented an award to the most improved member of the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Plymouth.

Eric Greenleaf, a former Royal Marines Musician, was invited to the Band Complex at HMS Raleigh to present the prize to 24-year-old Musn Aaron Cousins.

Maj Jason Burcham, the Plymouth Band's Director of Music, said: "Eric is a source of inspiration to all of us.

"He personifies the contribution and sacrifices made by his generation, and brings that part of the Royal Marines Band Service history to life. His generosity in sponsoring this award is just another way of maintaining links between our respective generations."

Eric is in regular contact with the Band and has attended numerous concerts and other events as their guest. In 2013 the band arranged for him to be presented with his Arctic Star Medal by the Second Sea Lord during a passing-out-parade at HMS Raleigh.

Jim proves to be class act

LS(EW) James 'Jim' Hick was presented with the award for top student by the Vice President of the Association of Old Crows (AOC).

Gathered outside Lewin Building, home of the Electronic Warfare Section at HMS Collingwood in front of colleagues, fellow course mates and members of the AOC, Jim was presented with the award.

The award has not been given to a student since 2012 and is allocated to the best individual on the Petty Officers EW Professional Qualifying Course.

Jim said: "It has been an intense few months of study that has enabled me to lead a department when I go back to sea."



● CPO Rickie Game, CPO Sandra Parkinson and LA(SE) Iain Whitwham at RNAS Yeovilton

Double delight for RNR air branch

CURRENT and former members of the Royal Naval Reserve Air Branch gathered at RNAS Yeovilton for a unique double anniversary.

The Somerset station was the setting for a birthday parade, celebrating the formation of the branch in 1980 and the 21st anniversary of the first ratings joining the branch in 1994.

Created on July 16 1980 to provide flying training for former aircrew officers to prepare for recall to service in time of war and periods of tension, the Air Branch initially consisted only of 35 pilots and observers. Their

numbers quickly expanded and the Reservists were soon integrating themselves into all areas of aviation activity around the Navy.

Today the Air Branch represents 19 per cent of the trained strength of the Maritime Reserves and delivers over 9,000 man-days of support to Fleet Air Arm activities.

Guest of Honour Rear Admiral Simon Williams, Flag Officer Reserve Forces, presented a Volunteer Reserves Service Medal and several Falklands Medals to reservists who became eligible after the qualifying period was extended by the 2014 Holmes review.

Reward for working hard

ROYAL Navy and MOD civilian staff have been rewarded for their exceptional efforts and contribution to their units over the past year by the Second Sea Lord and Naval Secretary.

The ten personnel were presented with commendations by Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock in the Great Cabin onboard Nelson's flagship HMS Victory, in Portsmouth.

Adm Woodcock said: "It was a pleasure to present my commendations to so many outstanding men and women."

Recipients of Second Sea Lord Commendations included Lt Cdr Jonathan Vans (SCC) RNR, who was recognised for his "outstanding" achievements as headquarters staff officer for the Sea Cadets Corps, a role he carried out for seven years.

Four of the recipients were from the Sea Cadets Corps, including Lt Cdr Debra Glanville, who said: "I don't recognise my efforts as being exceptional; it's just what I do for fun."

Former deep's novel debut

A FORMER Royal Navy submariner has had his first novel published.

James Law joined the Senior Service in 1993 and during his training as an air engineering artificer, served in a number of squadrons and in HMS Illustrious in 1995.

He joined the Junglies at RNAS Yeovilton and was promoted to Petty Officer before being drafted to 820 NAS at RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall.

In 1999, James ran for the Fleet Air Arm Field Gun Crew, as part of the team winning the Copenhagen Cup, and afterwards, applied for a commission.

Selected to join the officer corps, James left BRNC Dartmouth in 2001 and attended the University of Southampton studying a BEng in Electro-mechanical Engineering.

He joined HMS Torbay as a Marine Engineer Officer and served there until he left in 2009.

James, who lives in Hampshire, left the RN in 2013, after 20 years of service. His novel *Tenacity*, a thriller based in a nuclear submarine, is published by Headline, priced £13.99.

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Plaque presented

WHEN Paul Castle, a member of East of Scotland RMA branch, booked a round-the-world holiday last spring he asked branch chairman Tim Donovan if he could present a plaque to their colleagues in NSW branch.

A plaque was duly delivered (and a NSW plaque received in return) – and Paul returned to tell the branch about his trip.

On his way down under he stopped off at Pearl Harbor, in Hawaii, visiting the memorial site and wreck of USS Arizona, which commemorates the 1,177 men who died in the Japanese attack on December 7 1942.

In Australia, he took part in the ANZAC Day parade in Sydney – which attracted more than a million people.

On his way home, Paul took a train from Singapore through Malaysia to Bangkok, Thailand, but his plan to visit the Allied War cemetery at Kanchanaburi and the site of the bridge over the River Kwai was dashed by a delayed train – he hopes to return to those places in the future.

Axminster call

AXMINSTER is tucked away in the East Devon countryside – just five miles from the Channel – and branch secretary S/M Bill Sheppard has been in touch to say the RNA branch is still alive and kicking, and boasts a membership of 21; not bad, they feel, for a town of only 5,700 people.

90th birthday

FORMER Royal Marine Arthur Warrington, of Oadby, Leicester, has celebrated his 90th birthday.

Arthur is the former secretary of the Leicester branch of the RMA.

Alliance turns 70

FORMER shipmates from HMS Alliance got together for an emotional reunion at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum, Gosport, to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the boat's launch.

Former deep and museum volunteer guide Terry Fearnley, who organised the event, said: "Following the refurbishment of HMS Alliance last year, I felt that all former crew should have the opportunity to experience the brilliant work carried out by the contractors and museum colleagues."

"I am extremely proud of the response we received and was eager to meet up with shipmates."

"It was an emotional day and it is something I will not forget for a long time."

Around 130 former crew members attended the event, travelling from as far away as Australia and Canada, plus a couple from France.

There were also representatives from the wardroom, with at least four former commanding officers.



A special lapel pin was commissioned for the event.

Terry spent over three years on Alliance from 1968-1971, leaving her as an LME.

He added: "I thoroughly enjoyed my time serving on her with a fantastic crew, full of camaraderie."

"As a volunteer guide I feel so proud to show visitors around my home and privileged to be able to do so."

"All the volunteer guides are former submariners and they all give a great account of Alliance and the Submarine Service."

Built at Barrow-in-Furness by Vickers-Armstrong and launched in 1945, HMS Alliance was one of 14 A-class submarines built for service in the Far East during World War 2.

Commissioned in 1947, Alliance had a long and distinguished career of over 28 years that took her all over the world.

Alliance is the centrepiece of the museum, and is the official memorial to the men who fought in similar boats.

30 years for Tenbury

TENBURY Wells branch celebrated their 30th anniversary – doing rather better than initial hopes.

The branch was commissioned on June 20 1985, and S/M Trevor Jones, one of the early members still in the branch today, said they had hoped that the Branch might last for at least ten years.

It is now one of the most active of the 34 branches in No 8 Area, which covers the Midlands, and a number of shipmates have wider roles – Trevor is president of 8 Area, branch vice chairman Jim Goode is area chairman, branch secretary Ken Holloway is a former area chairman and now an area life vice president, and branch chairman Chris Dovey was area treasurer, and is now National Chairman of the RNA.

The branch held a 30th Anniversary Dinner attended by 57 members and guests.

On Sunday July 12 the branch handed over its old standard to St Mary's Church in Tenbury for laying-up, and dedicated a new one during the morning service.

GLARAC visit

MEMBERS of the GLARAC Association visited Norway as part of ceremonies marking the 75th anniversary of the loss of HM ships Glorious, Ardent, and Astoria on June 8 1940.

The focal point was Harstad, north of the Arctic Circle – a brief memorial service was held at the church in nearby Trondenes, followed by placing wreaths at the GLARAC Memorial, after which a visit was made to the Trondenes Historic Centre.

A wreath was laid at the grave of AB Pilkington, who survived the sinking of Glorious but died on reaching the mainland.



A SQUAT lobster inspects the memorial on the wreck of HMS Saracen, laid on the wreck by the deep-sea explorer who found the sunken submarine.

A weather window allowed Italian wreck-finder Guido Guy to send his small robot submarine Pluto to the bed of the Tyrrhenian Sea and place the boat's crest on its hull, 72 years to the day Saracen was scuttled.

The submarine was lost in August 1943 while trying to strangle Axis sealanes to Corsica, having previously been used to land agents on the German-occupied Mediterranean island.

Mr Gay, who located the wreck of the Italian battleship Roma three years ago, found Saracen earlier this summer – the end of a concerted effort by civilian and military experts over the past decade.

Historian and author Terry Hodgkinson, who has championed efforts to ensure Saracen's deeds are remembered

– a monument stands on the beach at Cupabia in south-west Corsica where the boat landed agents – said the sole surviving crew member of the submarine and the descendants of the crew owed Mr Gay a huge debt of gratitude.

"This is a tremendous achievement by Guido – he's spent two years looking for the

wreck, found it and now placed this fitting tribute on it," he added.

Besides landing spies, Saracen struck at troop transporters and other shipping moving between Corsica and Italy.

While patrolling the waters off Bastia in mid-August she was spotted by Italian corvettes who attacked and damaged the boat.

All but two of the submarine's crew escaped as they scuttled her: PO Ward and AB Downey drowned before they could be picked up by the Italians.

The boat lies in Italian waters about ten miles off the north-east coast of Corsica – and five miles from her reported position where previous search efforts had been concentrated.

The wreck is resting at a 45° angle 422 metres – 1,384 feet – below, which made placing the plaque, produced free of charge by Ideal Sand and Die Casting from Stoke, tricky.

He had intended for Pluto to lay the memorial on the periscope masts but the deck didn't appear solid enough, or by the periscope tubes, but there was a danger it might fall inside the wreck.

In the end the robot submersible placed the badge on Saracen's forward deck between her anchor chains, where it was promptly 'inspected' by marine life.

THE BIG BREW UP

The Big Brew Up is Armed Forces charity SSAFA's biggest fundraising event of the year and it's really easy to take part. We're asking you to hold a tea party to raise money for SSAFA and our Forces. Sign up now to receive a fundraising pack with all the goodies to help make your own Big Brew Up a success.

thebigbrewup.org.uk

Call 020 7463 9359

Email thebigbrewup@ssafa.org.uk

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This October put the kettle on and raise money for our Forces and their families.



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for our Forces
and their families



Hood group visits France

MEMBERS of the HMS Hood Association were invited to the 75th anniversary commemoration of the Battle of Mers el Kebir in 1940, where Hood led the British battle squadron.

The shipmates were invited to two wreath-laying ceremonies in Brest, France, by relatives of the French sailors who died in the battle.

The association party was led by Cdr Keith Evans, a 95-year-old pre-war veteran of Hood, while the Royal Navy was represented by a contingent of sailors and the Paris-based British Naval Attaché.

On July 3 1940 the Royal Navy squadron of capital ships, including battleships Valiant and Resolution, opened fire on French Navy capital ships anchored in the French Algerian port of Mers el Kebir.

This was part of Operation Catapult, an operation ordered by Winston Churchill to ensure that major units of the French fleet were denied to the Germans following the French surrender.

This "melancholy action" led to the deaths of nearly 1,300 French sailors and the sinking or disabling of several capital ships.

• Hood bell recovered - pg

Tribute to VC hero

MEMBERS of Woking branch took part in a ceremony to unveil a plaque commemorating a World War I Victoria Cross winner.

Capt Richard Willis was awarded the highest military honour for leading troops of the Lancashire Fusiliers in a battle to capture a beach at Gallipoli.

Promoted to Major, he later served at the Somme and Passchendaele, and became a teacher after the war.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery frigate in our July edition (right) was HMS Andromeda, which became the Indian ship INS Krishna.

The correct answers were provided by H Collett, of Dunstable, Beds, who wins our £50 prize.

This month's sloop (above), launched at the end of 1934, was renamed during construction at Clydebank.

Her design was modified to make her an Admiralty yacht, but at the outbreak of war further heavy modifications prepared her for active service - including the ramming and sinking of an Italian submarine, with all hands, in late 1942.

After the war she had a brief, unsuccessful career as a passenger ship, and was scrapped in the early 1950s.

1) Under what name was she originally ordered, and 2) what was her name during her war service?

Albion link reforged

SAILORS of HMS Albion raise a toast with veteran mates as the sleeping lion awakens from her four-year slumber.

In extended readiness since 2011, the assault ship is being brought back to life so she can take over as the nation's principal amphibious vessel from HMS Bulwark.

Albion already has around one seventh of her full complement of 350 sailors and Royal Marines and is undergoing a massive refit in her native Devonport - everything from overhauling the engines and cleaning the hull to installing system and weapon upgrades to keep pace with changes in Naval technology during the ship's slumber.

Bringing Albion back to life goes beyond the purely mechanical, and the 50-strong ship's company are reawakening bonds forged in the first decade

of the ship's active life, notably with the good folk of Chester.

Cheshire's county town is Albion's affiliate, and a group of sailors headed up the M5 and M6 for the first time in several years to rekindle that flame.

Chester branch hosted the visitors, who were all too glad to listen to the veterans' litany of rich war stories and dits of runs ashore around the globe.

At the City Hall, outgoing mayor Bob Rudd and his successor Hugo Deynem discussed sailors attending Chester's annual Remembrance Sunday Parade as well as the assault ship's rededication ceremony in two years' time.

The visit to the North-West closed with a focus on youth.

Accompanied by staff from the local Armed Forces Careers Office, the sailors dropped in on Upton High School where they discussed their roles on board and across the RN.



● Chester shipmates meet with ship's company of HMS Albion

Children interested in joining the RN were given time at the end of the brief to obtain further information from the careers advisors and members of the ship's company.

Finally to HMS Eaglet, 15 miles away in Liverpool; Albion's affiliated RNR unit were more than happy to provide manpower for the ship when the time comes to regenerate her.

Boys honoured

THE padre of the HMS St Vincent Association, the Revd Phillip Hiscock, has dedicated a Roll of Honour which lists the 274 Boys who joined the Royal Navy at HMS St Vincent and were still 'Boy Seamen' (under 17½ years old) when they died whilst on Service during World War 2.

The Roll of Honour was presented to the association's museum by the instigator of the project, ex-St Vincent Boy 93-year-old Jim Reed, who spent years researching the names.

In 2012 Jim arranged for the manufacture of a plaque, which commemorates all the 534 Boys killed in the war, and its laying, with appropriate ceremony, at Portsmouth Cathedral.

Also in attendance at the dedication was ex-HMS St Vincent Boy 93-year-old Arthur Smith, the last survivor of the ship's company of HMS Royal Oak, which was sunk by a U-boat at Scapa Flow in 1939.

Arthur presented the museum with a White Ensign which had been placed on the wreck of Royal Oak by Royal Naval divers.

THE Mayor and Mayoress of Pershore and other civic dignitaries were amongst guests at Pershore & District branch's annual Sea Sunday Service.

Almost 100 people attended, including family members of four shipmates who crossed the bar during the past year.

The traditional service was led by branch chaplain Canon Richard Etheridge, with a reading from chairman Terry Brimmell.

During the service, plaques were blessed and dedicated to founder chairman Ted Annis, Fred Bennett, Eddie Bick and

John Bowers. There was also a crest blessed to the memory of George Ludlow, of Pershore, who was lost during World War 2.

Once blessed, the plaques were placed upon the Wall of Remembrance by Terry before the Branch Roll of Honour was read out by Ted's daughter and branch secretary, Trudy Burge.

The service ended with the playing of Rod Stewart's *Sailing* during which tots of rum were handed out for Up Spirits in honour of shipmates lost since the branch's creation in 2002.

Four remembered

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Back in Berwick-on-Tweed

BERWICK-on-Tweed is celebrating its 900th anniversary throughout 2015, and as it is 40 years since the ship's company of HMS Berwick visited the town, they were invited to attend the celebrations and take part in the Armed Forces Day parade.

Ten former crew accepted the invitation, accompanied by five wives.

The gathering started on Friday evening when everyone met up at the Castle Hotel, where the following day's proceedings were discussed and a practice march took place in the car park, followed by drinks and a meal.

Saturday started with a drumhead service at St Andrew's Wallace Green Church, where they were allocated front-row seats.

This was followed by the half-mile march which took a route to the Town Hall, where the mayor took the salute.

The veterans enjoyed much applause along the way as the streets were lined with many townsfolk and visitors, who could not fail to spot the Berwick contingent as they held aloft a



● From left, Roy Bentley, Bugsy Moran, Ian Savin, Ken Buxton, Barry Staley, Peter Haines (Skipper), Peter Brighton, Bill Hennessey, Rocky Hudson, Jet Trainor

splendid banner specially made for the occasion.

After a few hours free time visiting various exhibitions, including one which told the story of the many ships which have borne the name HMS Berwick, they proceeded to the barracks, again with front-row seats, to watch a performance by

Cassino Band of Northumbria ACF. Uniformed re-enactors brought alive the history of the barracks from the civil war through to the second world war.

Later that evening they met at Meadow House Inn for drinks and a meal where the mainbrace was spliced, and all prepared to say their farewells.

Naval Quirks

AS THE SLOW MERCHANT CONVOYS WEREN'T GETTING SUPPLIES THROUGH TO ROMMEL IN LATE 1941..



..THE ITALIAN NAVY RISKED SENDING FAST WARSHIPS ACROSS THE MED. DANGEROUSLY LOADED WITH AMMO AND DRUMS OF FUEL...

I'd rather be our kind of sitting duck any day..

ITS SUCCESS WAS LIMITED. EVEN FOR THOSE THAT GOT THROUGH..

ON ONE SUCH TRIP, THE "DA NOLI" DELIVERED 70 TONS OF FUEL - BUT USED UP 200 TONS HERSELF ON THE ROUND TRIP!

Mercury plaque

THE fifth in a series of blue plaque unveilings has been carried out at the Izaak Walton pub in East Meon, close to the site of HMS Mercury at Leydene, in Hampshire.

The unveiling was conducted by Rear Admiral the Hon Sir Nicholas Hill-Norton - a particularly significant occasion as Lady Hill-Norton's parents lived in East Meon for a number of years, and the village is held in great affection by her and her husband.

The scheme presented the landlord of the Izaak Walton with an original HMS Mercury plaque for display in the pub.

Falklands date

SHIPMATES from Harwich and District branch organised a ceremony commemorating the 33rd anniversary of the liberation of the Falkland Islands.

The ceremony was marked by approximately 30 representatives from the Harwich area, and was organised by S/M Trevor Potter.

Other organisations that attended included the Royal British Legion, the Merchant Navy Association, the RAF Association and a delegation of veterans from the Parachute Regiment Association.

The service was conducted by branch chaplain the Revd Christopher Woods RN (retd), and a wreath was laid by S/M Andy Goodman.

Garden party

MEMBERS of the Reunion Committee and shipmates of No 4 Area of the RNA attended the Not Forgotten Association Garden Party held at Buckingham Palace. Rosie Thompson, Head of Events, presented a cheque for £2,000, raised at an Area Rally held at the Durrant Hotel, Bideford, East Devon. The venue is quite unique for No 4 Area.

Home opened

A NEW complex of sheltered apartments for retired Navy and Service personnel has been officially opened after a £3.45 million modernisation programme and extension.

Eliza Mackenzie Court is a 46-unit complex of one-bedroom rented apartments owned and operated by Portsmouth-based Agamemnon Housing Association.

Capt Steven Spencer, the Navy's Matron-in-Chief, officially opened the building because Eliza Mackenzie was the Navy's equivalent of Florence Nightingale in the mid-1800s.

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Sporting successes at Queen's College

STUDENTS from Queen's College Taunton have been celebrating an incredibly successful year competing at international and national levels in a wide range of academic, sporting and extra-curricular activities.

Hockey continues to go from strength to strength. Ben Stevenson captained the

England U16s at the Six Nations Tournament while Patrick Free was selected for the team, Dan Wilde for Wales U16s and Laura Fig for the girls' U18s. Both boys' U16 and girls' U18 teams played in the national finals.

A number of students swam at a national level: Rebecca Wilde won four golds and one silver at the Welsh championships. At the British event, Jacob

Greenow triumphed in the 400m individual medley, ranking him number four in Europe for his age. Jacob goes on to compete at the European Youth Olympic Festival 2015 in Tbilisi.

At the Senior South West Athletics Championships, Dan Wilde won the 1,500m steeplechase with a personal best and a national record of 4m 27s. Anna Stillwell won the BRC

National Junior Style Jumping Championship and professional polo-playing sisters Lolly and Jasmine Stanhope-White have competed across the world. Achievements for the pair include Lolly taking part in the UK National Women's Tournament and Jasmine captaining the England Colts team.

Queen's also continues to have a number of representatives in National Youth Choirs, orchestras and theatre groups and has celebrated champions in Irish dancing (Mady Baughn), table tennis (Nicholas Pun), fencing (Fergus McKendry) and cookery, with Kate Michaels winning the Regional Rotary Club Young Chef award and the prize for showing promise nationally.



Queen's College Open Days

Nursery, Pre-Prep and Junior School
9:00am - 12:00 noon, Friday 9th October

Senior School
9:00am - 12:00 noon, Saturday 10th October

Sixth Form Open Evening
6.00pm - 8.00pm, Wednesday 21st October



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Rewarding at times Prebendal

BOARDING at Prebendal School is an extremely rewarding experience, where our children become self-sufficient, independent and passionate learners.

As the oldest school in Sussex, we are proud of our history and tradition combining our established reputation in the South of England with a modern approach to teaching and preparing our pupils for a range of leading senior schools. We are a family-orientated school that caters to every child's individual needs and boarding can be full, weekly or flexi.

There are ample opportunities for our boarders to visit many breathtaking city, country and coastal attractions while Chichester itself is a beautiful city renowned for its heritage and enclosed in ancient city walls. As an exclusive boarding community, we have the flexibility to arrange outings and trips for

either the day or the weekend and we are easily able to transport our boarders from near to far.

We provide a safe and secure boarding environment for Armed Forces children with first-class pastoral care and a broad and challenging curriculum. This year, 15 of our Year 8 Leavers achieved awards to a range of prestigious senior schools. Among them are eight Year 8 pupils who achieved music awards to Ardingly, Bryanston, Clayesmore, Cranleigh, Eton, Lancing, Portsmouth Grammar School and Tonbridge. Three Prebendal pupils also achieved HM awards.

Contact us to receive our prospectus, arrange a visit or answer any questions; admissions secretary Lesa Burchell is on 01243 520970 / headpa@prebendlaschool.org.uk or see www.prebendlaschool.org.uk.

Can I afford boarding?

FIND out why state boarding schools could prove the smarter choice for Naval families.

Offering high-quality education, state-of-the-art facilities and exceptional pastoral care at less than half of the cost of the independent sector, it's no wonder state boarding is popular with Forces families whose children make up ten per cent of state boarders.

Fees are kept to around £4,000 per term – well below the maximum Continuity of Education Allowance – because the education element is paid for by the state and parents only cover the cost of boarding.

As state boarding schools are often mistaken for independent

schools, it's clear that value doesn't come at the expense of quality. Each year state boarding schools regularly out-perform other state schools and top many academic league tables throughout the country. Notably, nine of the *Sunday Times* Top 100 State Schools in 2014 were state boarding schools.

State boarding schools punch above their weight academically; the quality of teaching is frequently judged 'outstanding' by Ofsted and the stability offered by the boarding community enables pupils to make the most of their respective abilities.

Of course the concept of a 'good education' goes way beyond A-grades. The quality of facilities in state boarding schools is now indistinguishable from those in the independent sector following a £20m investment programme in accommodation.

Top-quality sports and arts

facilities underpin a packed programme of worthwhile evening and weekend activities and many too offer comprehensive Combined Cadet Force programmes, particularly popular with forces families.

Another tick in the box for state boarding is that it produces well-rounded, responsible children able to get along with others, often from different backgrounds. Pupils also have a chance to mix with local children attending the school on a day basis and are encouraged to get involved in the community.

Perhaps the single biggest benefit state boarding can offer the children of those serving in the Forces is the stability and consistency that is so often missing due to the demands of Naval life.

More information at www.sbsa.org.uk, where you can also download a free parents' guide.

Skills for life at Blundell's

THERE'S been a lot to celebrate at Blundell's School in Devon recently. Pupils have won awards at regional and national competitions in several subjects, including mathematics, physics, chemistry and design and technology. The creative arts continue to flourish; the latest production – *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – was performed both in the purpose-built theatre and outdoors, while the school's musicians have staged brilliant concerts of varied repertoire. There have also been fantastic results on the sports field with pupils playing at national, regional and county level.

Blundell's strength lies in the diversity of choice which gives every pupil a chance to shine. In addition to the high academic standards and richly deserved reputation in sport and the arts, the wide range of extra activities on offer (including many outdoor pursuits which make the most of Devon's coast and countryside)



Blundell's INDEPENDENT CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL

- Happy and fulfilling all-round education
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- Excellent pastoral care
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Services Package

Senior School 11-18 Boarding and Day



Grand days with the Dukies

AS A unique place to study for GCSEs and A Levels, The Duke of York's Royal Military School regularly challenges students – whether they be trekking in Borneo, tracking each other at CCF Camp, performing new dance routines on the big stage or proudly representing their school on Grand Day.

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Boyce was guest of honour and Inspecting Officer at the school's annual celebrations, where pupils performed a Trooping the Colour ceremony. The whole school paraded in full ceremonial uniform, accompanied by their military band.

The Lord Boyce told pupils and parents: "The Duke of York's Royal Military School provides a haven of stability and security for children of Forces families. Today, Forces are working hard all round the world, on land, in the air, on water or under the water, and it's of enormous worth to serving parents to know that their family is safe and being well educated."

Students performed a variety show of music, drama and dance for parents and friends on the night before Grand Day.

Every two years, the school's RSM organises a trip that will challenge students, building character and resilience. This year, they visited Borneo. Students trekked miles through the jungle encountering leeches, snakes, poisonous toads and insects along the way, lived simply in tin huts with no running water, learned about the locals' lives and saw wildlife such as crocodiles and monkeys completely at ease in their own habitat.

Meanwhile, Year 10 and Year 12 students enjoyed their Combined Cadet Force week in Crowborough. Going on exercise, building fires, learning first aid and how to safely shoot a weapon in a controlled environment meant that these Dukies developed many new skills.

Our next open day is on Saturday October 10. To book a place or for a personal tour of the school, call our registrar on 01304 245073 or see www.doyrms.com.

All-round excellence at QVS

QUEEN Victoria School is a co-educational boarding school fully funded by the MOD – parents don't pay fees – to provide stability and continuity of education for children of military personnel who are Scottish, have served in Scotland or in a Scottish regiment.

There are 277 pupils in the school, ranging from Primary 7 through to S6.

If QVS pupils were not here, they would be attending whichever was the local school in the area in which their parents were posted. QVS has a particular brief from the MOD to care for those eligible families who could not otherwise afford boarding education.

Ceremonial – piping, drumming, Highland Dancing and drill – constitutes an important part of the life of the school and is a visible link between the pupils and the work that their parents have chosen to do, in the UK Armed Forces. The Pipes,

Drums and Dancers of QVS are internationally renowned, having played at tattoos both at home and abroad, most recently at Basel's Christmas Tattoo in 2013 and the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in 2012.

Academic results are consistently well above the national averages and there's a wide programme of extra-curricular activities, games and the Combined Cadet Force. Major sports are rugby – where QVS is generally considered to "punch well above its weight" as a small school – and hockey, although there is a growing commitment to football as well.

QVS pupils and their families greatly value the strength of mutual support in a school community where all recognise the reality of Service life.

Contact our admissions secretary on 0131 310 2927 or at Queen Victoria School, Dunblane, Perthshire FK15 0JY, or visit www.qvs.org.uk.

Plaudits for RHS

THE Royal Hospital School, Holbrook, has been visited by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI), whose report summarised as follows:

"The school has clear aspirations for its pupils. It seeks to promote the attributes of inspiration, challenge and leadership in its pupils. Pupils are encouraged to strive for academic excellence and to endorse the values of service, loyalty and commitments, while upholding the school's unique and rich heritage.

"The school encourages leadership and a sense of adventure and self-discovery. A high priority is the promotion of service both within the school and to the wider community.

"The school aims to foster creativity and imagination within a civilised, caring, Christian community, based on high standards of behaviour, mutual respect, trust and courtesy between staff and pupils.

"The school cultivates a global outlook and sense of

environmental responsibility. It aims to encourage pupils to develop fitness, wellbeing and enter into healthy competition."

There are nine fields rated in the full report and the school received the top (excellent) assessment in each one: quality of pupils' achievements and learning; contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provisions; contribution of teaching; pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; contribution of arrangements for pastoral care; contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety; quality of boarding; quality of governance; and quality of leadership and management, including links with parents.

Attend our open mornings (Oct 3 and Nov 7), contact 01473 326136 / admissions@royalhospitalschool.org or visit www.royalhospitalschool.org.

Marine Society is where it's @

THE Marine Society has developed three apps for seafarers to learn maths, advanced maths and written English.

Using familiar seafaring language, imagery and maritime examples, the apps work on Android or IOS phone, tablet or computer anywhere in the world with an internet connection, but once downloaded seafarers can learn, at their own pace, offline.

The online @Sea programmes – Writing@Sea, Maths@Sea and Maths@Sea Plus – have been designed for those working at sea using nautically-themed examples and language.

The Writing@Sea course will help seafarers to draft reports, letters and emails, whilst the Maths@Sea course covers basic algebra geometry, and trigonometry. The Maths@Sea Plus is for students undertaking OOW or higher STCW certification for following a maritime course that involves some maths.

The society has received recognition from the industry for the @Sea programmes, including the Nautical Institute and the Institute for Marine Engineering Science and Technology (IMarEST) for continuous professional development for those working at sea – making courses valuable to career development in the RN and beyond.

See www.marine-society.org or visit your app store to download.

GET A HEAD START AT SEA

Get the qualifications and confidence you need to go further with our online @Sea courses in English and Maths. Find out more:

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marine-society.org

Recognised for continuing professional development by IMarEST and the Nautical Institute



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We welcome applications from any student who wants to study GCSEs and A Levels at our unique and iconic school with its strong traditions.

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- Active lifestyle including sport, music, drama and activities.
- £24.9 million refurbishment has delivered a new sports centre, high-quality accommodation and teaching blocks and a performing arts centre.
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2015/16 fees are just £11,820* per year.

If you qualify for CEA, you will only pay £1,182 per year.



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*Fees are reviewed annually



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The Royal Hospital School is a leading co-educational boarding school for 11 to 18 year olds, located in 200 acres of Suffolk countryside. It has a thriving CCF and more than 200 pupils have some connection to the armed services. Generous assistance with fees for all serving and retired RN and RM personnel.



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To book contact Admissions on 01473 326136 or admissions@royalhospitalschool.org

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Saturday Mornings

10 October 2015
14 November 2015
5 December 2015

Wednesday Afternoons

4 November 2015
25 November 2015
13 January 2016



WELBECK
DEFENCE 6TH FORM
COLLEGE



In the line of fire...

THIS photograph was taken as HMS Bulwark returned home to Devonport – and shows some of the hazards faced by the RN.

In this case I know the owner of the houseboat.

Mark recently finished the boat after months of hard graft and she is beautiful – nearly as beautiful as Bulwark bearing down on her.

The photo was taken as Mark put the houseboat through numerous sea trials before putting it up for sale.

I sell lots of copies of *Navy News* in my newsagents shop in Plymouth and thought my friends in the Royal Navy would find this picture amusing.

Andy Heal
Plymouth



Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tipple to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is Andy Heal

Books cost too much

AS A person who has used Professor Nicholas Rodger's *The Wooden Walls* on quite a few occasions in various speeches/lectures to debunk the urban myth that the Georgian Navy was nearly 100 percent pressed men, I now find it sad that another book on the same subject is out of my – and I would imagine a very large number of peoples' – purchasing power at £75.

The book, *The Myth of the Press Gang: Volunteers, Impressionment and the Naval Manpower Problem in the Late Eighteenth Century*, was written by J Ross Dancy and reviewed in *Navy News* in July.

This problem is succinctly put by Eric Grove's closing paragraph in his review.

"I do not understand why anyone would want to publish a book which the majority of potential readers cannot afford to buy."

Carl Beeson
Plymouth

Pilot should have listened

The headline 'Let's hear it for Swordfish' on Page 27 of July's *Navy News* brought a smile to my face as I remember hearing it for a Swordfish.

In 1944 as an AML(1) at RNAS Inskip, I was detailed along with a leading hand to operate the Chance ID light for night flying ADDLES (attempted dummy deck landings).

Stationed at the end of the runway, abreast of the designated area on the runway for the landings and close to the batman, things were quite routine until I heard the leading hand call out "This silly bugger's too high".

We could see the wing lights of the Swordfish were well up in

Terror over statue

READING the article on HMS Diamond's visit to the De Beers jewellers in the August *Navy News* reminded me of my time in the previous Diamond.

I was the duty Jack Dusty whilst we were storing the ship in Chatham around mid 1967.

Two lorries packed with stores arrived about 4pm so I arranged for the duty watch to decant all the boxes into shoreside chacons with the intention of opening them all the next day and getting the gear stored on board.

Whilst this was happening I was busy signing dozens of delivery notes for the drivers.

The next day I was terrified to have to tell the CPOA that a box was missing and that it had contained a solid silver statuette of Sir Cecil Rhodes which was to be put on display outside the wardroom.

Happy shipmates

AN article on the letters page of your July edition regarding the rum bosun reminded me of a terrible storm which hit a convoy coming back from north Russia.

The barrels in the rum locker broke adrift with the contents being spilt all over the deck.

The officer of the watch ordered it to be pumped overboard to avoid the possibility of fire.

He was however quite surprised that the duty watch called upon to carry out this evolution had suddenly doubled in size.

I called the stores only to be told that the item had been signed for – of course I was the signatory!

Eventually it transpired that the driver hadn't collected the box from the lock-up in the V&A store so we eventually got it. The Chief wasn't happy though and stopped my leave for three days and gave me a lesson never to sign for anything unless I saw it.

When the ship decommissioned I understood that De Beers were given the statuette back for safekeeping for the next HMS Diamond.

Unfortunately, despite all the efforts of the HMS Diamond Association, the statuette cannot be found.

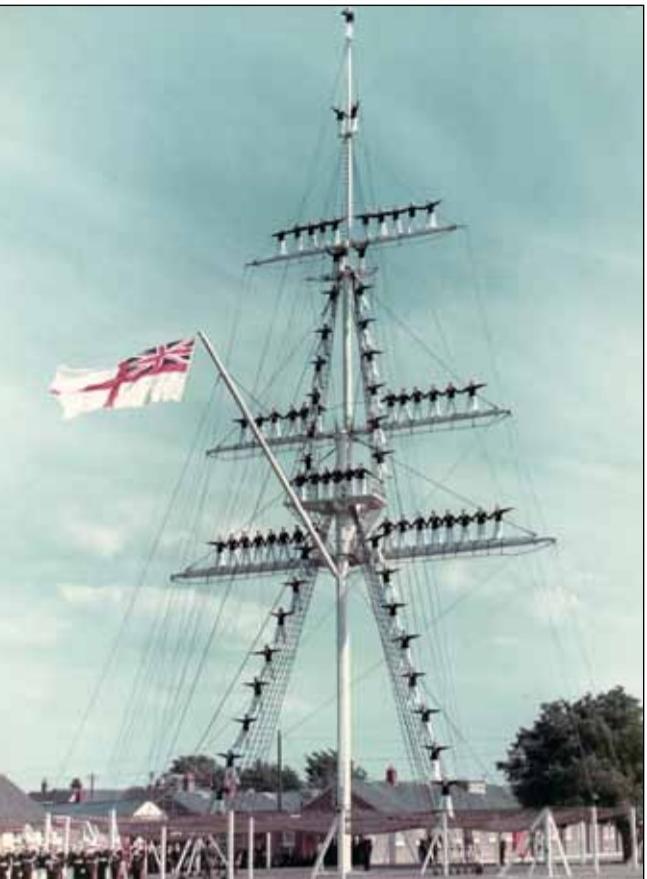
David Nairne
Secretary, HMS Diamond
Association
Portsmouth

Although it was the middle watch word had got around and soon men were clambering out of their hammocks and carrying mess fannies with a variety of deck swabs and rushing down to the rum locker.

On hands and knees, they were soaking up this precious liquid. Back in the mess by the dim light they filtered the rum through clean handkerchiefs.

Arriving back in Scapa Flow, HMS Vindex had the jolliest crew imaginable.

Geoff Shelton
Glasgow



THOUSANDS of young boys climbed this mast at HMS Ganges as part of their training.

It would be nice if the mast was restored as a memorial to a past age.

Tony Gorman
(HMS Ganges 1962)
Middlesex

Helping daughters

I WORK for SSAFA the Forces families charity.

We at SSAFA in Cornwall were asked by Mrs Alicia Cornium if we could help her and her sister.

Their father served in the Royal Navy during WW2.

He was a PO serving in HMS Exeter, the York-class cruiser during the battle of the Java Sea when she was attacked by the Japanese and sunk on March 1 1942.

After four-and-a-half hours in the sea PO Humphrey and many of his shipmates were rescued by a Japanese destroyer that actually returned to the scene to rescue survivors.

The reason for their return was that the Japanese were impressed by the Brits' bravery and the way they conducted the battle that they acknowledged them as warriors and therefore worthy of being rescued.

The sailors were taken to Nagasaki where they spent the next three-and-a-half years in Fukuoka 2 Japanese POW camp.

PO Thomas and those that survived their ordeal were liberated by the Americans in September 1945.

PO Thomas not only survived the sinking of his ship, his years in a POW camp and witnessing the A bomb attack on Nagasaki but lived to a ripe 91 years of age before passing away in 1998.

The POW Research Network Japan have been looking for survivors of Fukuoka 2 camp and their relatives to attend an unveiling ceremony on September 13 in Japan at the site of the camp.

Mrs Cornium has been invited to attend and asked if we SSAFA Cornwall could assist in helping her raise the necessary funds for the air fare and hotel expenses for her and her sister.

SSAFA approached the RNBT which supplied the requisite funds to enable Mrs Cornium to attend the ceremony.

Mr F West

Division Secretary SSAFA mid Cornwall

Recalling silly sailors

I WAS interested to read the letter 'Soap ransom on scran-bag day' in the August 2014 edition (I read *Navy News* long after anyone else).

The letter included a photograph of a kit muster on HMS St Vincent in 1937 and brought back memories.

The author referred to Pusser's Lard. It was actually called Pusser's Hard and got its name for its official description in the Victualling Rate Book, where it appeared as 'soap, hard and yellow.'

When returning home on seasonal leave, my welcome from both my parents was very

warm, and this might have had something to do with the fact that I would be in possession of the permitted 200 duty-free cigarettes. I would also have brought home two or three bars of Pusser's Hard, because mum swore by it.

I also recall watching a black-and-white film in Victoria Barracks called *Seven Silly Sailors* and I am wondering if any of your readers might recall it.

It told the story of seven ratings on a ship during the war who inadvertently committed one cardinal sin each.

Doug Andrews
Hertfordshire

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Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in *Navy News*, nor can we reply to every one.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues. The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.

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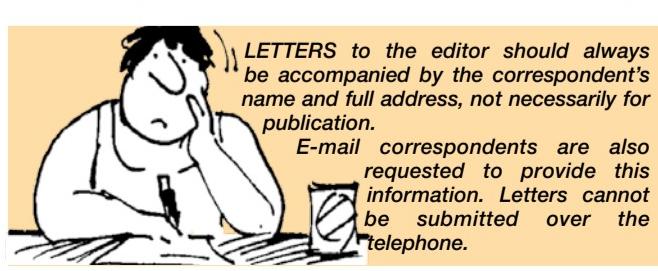
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E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.



Top role for Ross

BARROW unit member POC Ross Creighton (*above*) has been appointed Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for the next 12 months.

Ross, who recently started an engineering apprenticeship with BAE Systems, was presented with his certificate and badge by the Lord Lieutenant of Cumbria Claire Hensman.

Ross was accompanied by his parents, his younger brother Liam – who is also a member of Barrow unit – and the Senior Staff Officer for North West Area Cdr (SCC) Janet Evans RNR.

Ross's citation, which was read out at the ceremony, recorded that he has been a member of Barrow unit since the age of 11, and has managed to reach the top rank of Petty Officer Cadet, gaining a first-class specialisation in both mechanical and electrical engineering.

He was also described as "a thoroughly dependable young man who spends most of his free time at the unit fulfilling a variety of tasks and assisting others."

Making the most of Tall Ships in Belfast

SEA Cadets had a major role to play in the Tall Ships gathering in Belfast.

The Port of Belfast was the setting for one of the 2015 Tall Ships races, and the Corps was one of the official charities.

Cadets from across the UK

were on hand to support their Northern Ireland colleagues as they made the most of the spectacular opportunity – visitors included the Sefton Glee Club and the Northern Area Sea Cadet Band, which were popular with the vast crowds enjoying fine summer weather.

The Northern Area Band welcomed captains of the ships from around the world to Belfast City Hall before leading the parade of crews through the streets, eventually meeting up with the Sefton Glee Club on board frigate HMS Northumberland for a final event with the Band – Beating Retreat.

It is estimated that more than 500,000 people visited the festival over four days, with the Sea Cadets recruiting and demonstrating what the Corps is all about by providing fun and adventure.

Neal Somerville, Development Worker for the Sea Cadets in Northern Ireland said: "This has been a fantastic opportunity for the Sea Cadets, and to witness the cadets having a great time and enjoying the atmosphere is brilliant.

"We are truly grateful to Belfast City Council for giving us



● Lt (SCC) Deirdre Lewis RNR gets to grips with Captain Jack Sparrow



● Sub Lt (SCC) Neal Somerville RNR and a group of cadets are in the frame at the Tall Ships Race event in Belfast

the opportunity."

While the shoreside was alive with music and a great festival atmosphere, Sea Cadet crews from Northern Ireland provided support to the Port of Belfast by supplying patrol boats to ensure the safety and well-being of the public.

As the ships left Belfast on the first leg of the race to Norway, so did five Northern Irish cadets.

The quintet who were sailing said that this would be an experience and an opportunity to meet new friends.

The knowledge that they have gained from being on Sea Cadet flagship TS Royalist has set them ahead of the others on board – which is allowing them to offer additional support and help to give more people a great experience on the high seas.

Milestone for Royalist

NEW Sea Cadet flagship TS Royalist has made her first voyage with a full complement of Sea Cadets on board.

The brig, launched in Spain just before Christmas 2014, set sail with 24 cadets on trip along the Jurassic Coast to Weymouth.

It is the latest milestone for a ship whose story started five years ago with the launch of a 'New Ship' appeal to replace the existing Royalist.

The new Royalist is expected to welcome 900 cadets each year on a programme of offshore voyages.



Meeting a legend

STOKE-on-TRENT unit member Jack Nuttall managed to get a Sea Cadet poster signed by motorcycle racing legend Carl Fogarty at the Staffordshire Bike Show.

The cadets were at the show, staged at the Britannia Stadium, home of Stoke City Football Club, to man a fundraising stand and to raise the profile of Sea Cadets in the Potteries.

Their duties included meeting and greeting bikers attending the event from all over the county of Staffordshire and the West Midlands area.

Jack also had his photograph taken with Foggy, the most successful World Superbike racer with almost 60 race victories and four World Championships in the 1990s.

The rider, who retired in 2000, was also a force to be reckoned with on the TT scene, breaking the lap record in the early 1990s.

The show featured an attempt at the world record for 'largest number of Triumph motorcycles in a parade' – organisers are still awaiting official ratification.

Sea Cadet dynasty

A YORKSHIRE family have created something of a dynasty in the Corps with a pedigree stretching back to the 1960s.

Cdr (SCC) Keith Bingham RNR and his wife Carol recently celebrated their ruby wedding.

Keith joined the Sea Cadets in the late 1960s as a young lad and met his childhood sweetheart Carol when she was at the same unit – Sheffield – as a cadet in the Girls' Nautical Training Corps.

Both continued in the Corps as staff once they reached 18, but then had a few years out to start a family. Keith joined the South Yorkshire Police.

They married in July 1975 with the Sheffield Sea Cadet band performing for them outside church (*pictured right*).

Keith then joined the Corps in the 1980s as a PO and worked his way up through the ranks, achieving the level of Commander.

Carol also rejoined the Corps as a PO, helped set up the Junior section at Sheffield in the 1990s then became admin officer at the unit before leaving the Corps again.



Cdr Bingham is now Senior Staff Officer for Eastern Area – as well as offering lots of support to daughter A/PO (SCC) Heather Blades in her new role as OiC of Doncaster unit.

And Carol's interest has been rekindled, as she is now admin officer for her daughter's unit.

Heather said: "They truly are an inspirational couple and I hope I and my husband, Robert Blades, follow in their footsteps, as we too met in the Sea Cadets back in 1998 and have been married 14 years this August."

The cadet story continues as their eldest grandchild Cameron Blades joined the junior section when she was ten and passed out as a cadet in July as she turned 12.

Doncaster unit had their first Royal Naval Parade with A/PO

Blades in charge. The ship's company was inspected by Area Officer Cdr Bagot-Jewitt RN, and the unit was honoured to have L/Bdr Ben Parkinson on board.

Ben has had plenty of involvement in the unit and presented the cadets with their awards on the evening.

Doncaster has been through a period of instability recently, without anyone at the helm long enough to steer a steady course, but with more settled times the unit has gone from strength to strength.

"Without the support of the staff, committee, cadets and parents TS Lightning wouldn't be where it is today, and here's to a very bright future for the whole ships company," said A/PO Blades.



● Carol and Keith Bingham

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Surprise cheque arrives

PETERHEAD unit was presented with a cheque for £500 at the Portsoy Traditional Boat Festival.

The cheque was handed over on behalf of the North of Scotland Branch of the Nautical Institute by local marine consultant Capt Bob Sinclair, and is the second consecutive year of support by the branch.

As part of its programme the branch holds monthly meetings to discuss nautical and offshore-related issues, and also hold fundraising events such as a mariners' dinner dance.

When presenting the cheque Capt Sinclair highlighted his own time at Fraserburgh unit TS Gowans between 1967 and 1974, and how the skills, knowledge and experiences gained during the period helped to shape and support his career, even into formal retirement.

He said: "I really had a fantastic time, learned to sail, kayak, travelled all over the UK and gained an insight into seamanship, navigation, stability and engineering."

"I still sail all over the world whilst on holiday."

Since retiring five years ago, a shortage of marine skills in the offshore oil, gas and renewable energy industries led to a number of employment offers "too good to refuse" and which resulted in his setting up a marine consultancy which has seen him fully occupied, even during the current downturn.

He also stated that a number of the current, and past, North of Scotland Nautical Institute branch committee are ex-cadets, that local members appreciate the role played by Sea Cadet units in supporting young people into valued careers at sea, and that the Institute fully support the work of the local units, helping where they can.

That help ranges from financial support, to providing speakers to showcase marine activities and career opportunities.

Peterhead's CO, Sub Lt (SCC) John Bowman RNR, said: "We are delighted the North of Scotland Branch of the Nautical Institute has been able to support us again this year."

"It is not every day a cheque arrives out of the blue."

The Nautical Institute is an international body for maritime professionals involved in the control of sea-going ships which aims to enhance the professional standing and knowledge of members who are drawn from all sectors of the maritime world.

www.nautinst.org



Arthur Creed of Sittingbourne branch of the Royal British Legion presents an RBL Affiliation Badge to PO (SCC) Laura Friday, of Wellingborough unit. The presentation to cadets and staff was as a result of the recent affiliation of the two organisations.

276 years of experience



MORE than 270 years of Corps experience was mustered to witness the 'near-retirement' of Richmond unit's Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr (SCC) John Porter RNR., who has completed 50 years of service to the organisation.

Pictured left are some of the former London SW Area COs taken at the unit – from left, Tony Loveridge, John Porter, John Mills, Dave Rowles and John Smith.

Lt Cdrs (SCC) John Mills and John Smith were previous COs of Richmond before John Porter took over the reins.

The quintet in the photo have totted up 276 years worth of Sea Cadet affiliation, with roles including Headquarters Staff Officers, Area Staff Officers and Commanding Officers, and to date all of them are still involved in one way or another and are still assisting with the training of Sea Cadets.

Wings students show their mettle



Top student LC Michael Cooper with CPO Carl Mason above Portsmouth

and kit supplied by Flightstore.

The week began with low cloud and rain, which kept the cadets in the classroom, but this soon cleared up on day two when the weather quickly brightened, and in superb conditions all eleven cadets were able to have at least one 30-minute flight.

These were around the local area and covered Portsmouth to Thorney Island or across to the Isle of Wight.

Two more days of good weather allowed more flights for the cadets, who were able to put theory into practice and complete their navigational exercises despite busy

Subjects this time included advanced navigation, radiotelephone, air law and flight simulator training using software

New unit opens in Wellingborough

THE Sea Cadets have relaunched a new unit within Wellingborough based at Wren School, making five units within Northamptonshire.

The new recruits – five Juniors and 21 Sea Cadets, with six volunteer instructors – are currently undertaking basic training with the support of Market Harborough unit.

The recruits are looking forward to going afloat at the nearby boating station at Thrapston and furthermore, their enrolment ceremony that is due to take place in September.

Wellingborough unit operates out of the music block every Wednesday evening from 7pm to 9.15pm on the London Road campus.

airspace due to NoTAMs (Notice to Airmen) affecting Portsmouth Harbour during the build up to the start of the Americas Cup World Series yachting event.

The Head of Sea Cadet training Dan Jardine paid a visit to the course to meet the cadets and hear how they were finding the training – even managing to have a short flight before returning back to London.

Throughout the week the Grob motor glider performed flawlessly and both the cadets and instructors agreed it was an ideal aircraft for this part of the Sea Cadets aviation training.

Both cadets were pleased to hear they have been invited back to join the SCAV team as cadet instructors for next year's ground school.



Drill party at party

MEMBERS of Portsmouth and Warsash units helped out at Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock's garden party.

The team from Warsash provided logistics support while Portsmouth (above) recreated their National Drill winning Colour Party display. Pictured with Admiral Woodcock (back row, third left) is Captain Sea Cadets Capt Phil Russell (fourth left) and members of unit and area staff.

Rifle drill is used in the Corps to teach cadets teamwork, commitment and self-discipline. The rifles used are for parade purposes only.

Gosport plans to expand

GOSPORT unit's AGM started on a sad note, with president Cdr Mike Shives (Retd) reporting the deaths of long-serving former unit management committee chairman Lt Mike Draper and Alderman John Train, whose borough council contacts and knowledge will be sorely missed.

Cdr Shives thanked Margaret Draper for her sterling work as UMC secretary until her recent resignation, and announced that she will become a Life Vice President of the unit.

CPO (SCC) Tony Salmon thanked staff for their hard work, and said that cadet numbers have risen to the point where there is now a waiting list for Juniors and several applicants in the pipeline for Seniors.

With the move to new premises at Fort Blockhouse next year, it is expected that additional numbers will be able to be accommodated.

Gosport now has 48 Senior Cadets, making it one of the largest units in Southern Area.

The unit underwent their biannual Admiralty Inspection where Area officer Cdr Greene RN (retd) inspected the Cadets.

After various exercises and demonstrations everyone mustered for presentations and to hear Cdr Green complement cadets, staff, the unit management committee and supporters on their achievements.

For the record, 81 per cent of cadets achieved an advancement during the period, and the overall score in all aspects of the unit's activities was 85 per cent, which meant the unit will be awarded a Burgee again this year.

In addition, the unit achieved a 98 per cent score within Southern Area which made them one of the top two units in the division.

Tribute to destroyer

ON JUNE 12 2015, exactly 33 years to the day after HMS Glamorgan was struck by an Exocet missile off the Falklands, members of Cardiff unit once more paid tribute to the 14 sailors in the destroyer who lost their lives.

Representing TS Cardiff and the HMS Glamorgan Falklands Association, CMEM(M) John Callaghan, who served in the ship throughout the 1982 conflict, laid a bouquet of flowers at the Falklands Memorial in Alexandra Gardens, Cardiff, in memory of his fallen comrades.

John said afterwards "TS Cardiff does this every year – everyone in the unit is very supportive."

"I can see just by the looks on the faces of the cadets that they fully understand what we are doing and why we do it, and I know from feedback I receive from the Association's members that it is greatly appreciated."

"So, on behalf of the Association, I extend heartfelt thanks once again to all at TS Cardiff."

Parade day

LOWESTOFT unit had their Royal Naval Parade at TS Diadem, carried out by Cdr Charles Bagot-Jewitt.

Also in attendance were parents and local dignitaries from the town and the Lowestoft contingent; there was also good support from Beccles and Great Yarmouth units.

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Raleigh reaches out

SIX weeks is not a long time to turn keen amateurs into top-notch chefs – but that was no problem to the staff at the Defence Maritime Logistics School, based at HMS Raleigh.

The group of fledgling chefs were all injured or ill Service personnel – and they proved their mettle by ending the course with a lunch for invited guests.

Part of a programme for the Hasler Naval Service Recovery Centre, the course teaches new skills and helps raise self-esteem – all part of the Hasler ethos.

Former WO Chef Rod Naylor, previously senior craft training provider at DMLS and an instructor at a civilian college where one of his students was Michelin-star chef Michael Caines, is the linchpin of the course, giving his time for free.

"They are all so keen – a pleasure to teach," said Rod.

"Some are ambitious – one from a previous course ended up with a certificate in the Services catering competition

"Others just want to be able to show off their new skills to their wives."

"But they have all got to do it exactly right – there is no point coming otherwise."

The final meal – to guests including Hasler supporter and Dartmoor Zoo owner Benjamin Mee – included roasted seabass, sautéed mushrooms and sweetcorn puree, and morello cherry and rum baked curd cheese slice.

■ The RM Band Plymouth – also based at Raleigh – has also reached out to the community by inviting children from the area to train and play with the professionals in a summer school.

Up to 30 youngsters rehearsed with the band over the week, which culminated in a free concert in Torpoint – the final performance for Band Director Maj Jason Burcham RM before he moved on to a new post with the Band Service HQ at Whale Island in Portsmouth.

Sailors' records are placed online

PEOPLE hoping to research the history of sailors who served between the two world wars will not have to make a pilgrimage to the archives in London.

Historians at the National Archives in Kew have digitised more than 550 volumes of Admiralty records detailing the careers of RN ratings and RM ranks who enlisted before 1923 and served after 1924 (the records of those who joined the Senior Service after 1926 are still held by the MOD).

The series of documents – ADM 362 and 363 – cover the RN Registers of Seamen's

Deaths

Rear-Admiral Charles B Williams CB. Born in South Africa, he became an RN engineer officer, including training on board HMS Howe and Mauritius. 1946-49 appointed to HMS Nigeria based in Simons Town. Conducted landmark engineering trials (gas turbines; flight deck equipment and steam turbines for nuclear boats). 1960-62 Engineer Officer in HMS London, then engineer on staff of the Flag Officer Middle East, Bahrain. 1967 duty commander in Naval Operations, London, later deputy manager Portsmouth Dockyard, then superintendent Clyde Submarine Base, Port Admiral, Chatham 1978 and appointed CB 1980, June 11. Aged 90.

Cdr Simon E Atkins. RNAS Brawdy, Culdrose, Prestwick, Yeovilton and 803 NAS. July 5.

Cdr John A Bartrop. HMS Penelope, Gurkha, Triumph, Lochinvar, Collingwood, Centurion, Cochrane, RNEC Madanon, Service Attaché Riyadh and Cairo. July 25.

Lt Hugh F Cotton. HMS Bulwark, Victoria and Seahawk. July 20. Aged 85.

Lt Alan W Dobson. HMS Osprey, Ariel, Goldcrest and Albatross. July 5. Aged 85.

Lt Col John H Fisher. HMS Zulu, CTCRM Lympstone, HQ Cdo Forces, 3, 40 and 42 Cdo, RM Deal & Eastney and RN College Greenwich. July 8. Aged 95.

Norman Richardson A/RMech(A)2. Served 1943-46 HMS Raleigh, Drake, Ariel, Sparrowhawk, Waxwing, Merganser, Daedalus, Queen and Falcon. Greater Manchester branch FAAA. July. Aged 90.

John Jones A/B. Served 1948-58 HMS Ganges, Ulster, St James, Portsmouth Castle, Opossum and Teazer. July 3. Aged 82.

Steve Burton Stoker. HMS Sultan and Ark Royal (R09). Worked on Flight Deck Steam Catapult Section early 70s. Aged 63.

Kenneth 'Ken' Dyer POME. Served 1939-61 HMS Rodney, Bangor, Laertes, LST, Q1(Perugia), Hornet, MTBs and three years in the Royal Malay Navy. Royal Naval Engineroom Association. Aged 94.

Vincent 'Bob' Foster CCMEA(M). Served 1969-93. HMS Naiad, Euryalus, Ashanti, Tiger, Sheffield (Falklands), Glasgow, Manchester and Ark Royal, also Ganges, Raleigh, Sultan, Nelson and Defiance. June 3 in France. Aged 61.

George W Hampton FCMT(N). Served 1949-79 in RN Hospitals Plymouth, Poole, Alderney, Jersey, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Malta and Gibraltar, also HMS Victorious. RNMBR & SBS Association. July. Aged 84.

Abraham Victor Collins SBA. Served 1943-46 RNR Chatham, HMS Glendower, Pembroke, Westcliffe, Mantis and Eland. RNMBR & SBS Association. July. Aged 89.

Ronald McDonald Fowle Telegraphist. Served 1945-47. Captain D's Pool at Greenock, HMS Honeysuckle Convoy JW65, Sandhurst and Loch Fada Londonerry Sqn. HMS Loch Fada F390 Association. April 27. Aged 89.

Alan 'Clem' Roy Letchford CEMN1. Served 1952-75. HMS Collingwood Maidstone, (GPV) Terror, Theseus, Hornet (Dark Hunter), Vernon, Maralinga GWR (President), Osprey, Dolphin, Murray (Drake & Osprey), Trafalgar (Victory IV & Phoenixia), Diana, Sirius, Dryad and Nelson. RBL. July 8. Aged 79.

Royal Naval Association Katherine 'Kath' Green (nee Stevens) WRNS L/Officers Steward. Served 1952-55. After training at Burfield served at HMS Mercury. Member Buckingham RNA transferred to Cheltenham then Uttoxeter branch. April 23. Aged 84.

Julia Daley. Secretary of Axminster RNA for many years. July 10.

Renee Clarke (nee Craigie) Wren. Served 1952-55 HMS Dauntless, Ariel, Gannet and Falcon. Norwich branch. June 26. Aged 82.

Cyril Curtis AB. Served 1943-46 HMS Ganges, Mantis (Coastal Forces – Lowestoft) and MTB 695. Norwich branch. July 8. Aged 89.

Howard Charles Jeffries CPO. Served 1949-71 in six carriers. Chairman and Life Member of Wells RNA. At various times 4 Area president, founder member and chairman of Street RNA, Street RBL chairman then president until his death. Founder member and chairman Glastonbury Sea Cadets.

Denis Cogswell PO Artificer FAA. Served 1939-46 on Atlantic convoys and in Canada. Lichfield branch. July 22. Aged 91.

Hugh O'Connor Tel. Served 1942-46 in minesweepers, HMS Vatersay and later RNR and Lt Cdr (SCC) Huddersfield. Founder member Halifax RNA, chairman then president. July 19. Aged 91.

Association of RN Officers and RNOC Cdr Jonathan M Findlay. HMS Eagle, Wakeful, Trafalgar, Puncheston, Dryad, Centurion, Mercury, HMY Britannia and MOD Dir Navy Signals. April 15.

Lt Cdr Hugh D C Gibson. HMS Orestes, Brecon, Myngs, Tamar, Lofoten, Mercury, Royal Arthur, MMS 1534 and MTB 304. July 15.

Lt Cdr David L Crofts. HMS Victorious, Tamar, Heron, Daedalus, Victory RNA, 728, 805, 813, 767, 759, 736, 738, 804 and 781 NAS. July 13. Aged 90.

Lt Cdr A Denis Margrett RD* RNR. Unattached. July 10. Aged 96.

Lt Hugh E A Cox. HMS Challenger, Bern and Mystic. 2014.

Lt Peter Sampson. HMS Turpin, Onslaught and Dolphin. July 15.

Lt David Wylie. Served 1977-2012. HMS Temeraire and Neptune. July 27. Aged 55.

Capt John C O Hill RM. HMS Mauritius, Devonshire, Ganges, Vernon, President, Cdo School RM, 3 and 40 Cdo. July 15.

2/O DAC Wilson WRNS. July 10. Aged 98.

Submariners Association

David 'Dave' Sullivan L/Sea UC2. Served 1953-60 in HM Submarines Artful, Artemis, Turpin, Alderney, Ambush and Tiptoe. Gosport branch. May 11. Aged 81.

Lt Mike Shepherd RAN (L/Sea. UC2). Served 1955-60 and 1976-81 in HM Submarines Utrix, Trespasser, Thorough and Telemachus, and RAN Submarines Oxley, Ovens, Otway and Onslow. Australia branch. May 20. Aged 78.

Lt (E)(WE) Mike Draper. Served 1947-64 in HM Submarines Aurochs Alliance, Alderney, Alaric, Trespasser, Thule, Odin and Walrus. Gosport branch. May 22. Aged 85.

James Taylor RO2. Served 1958-60 in HM Submarines Sentinel and Aurora. Nottingham branch. May 25. Aged 78.

Derek Moss POSM. Served 1948-54 in HM Submarines Trenchant, Truculent, Trump, Telemachus and Aurora. North Staffs branch. June 1. Aged 85.

Cdr (ME) Ted Edwards. Served 1950 in HM Submarines Token, Teredo and Tabard. Taunton branch. June 9. Aged 86.

William Carr ME1. Served 1965-71 in HM Submarines Talent, Trump, Tabard, Oracle and Otter. Australia branch. June 12. Aged 71.

Frank Dyer AB UC3. Served 1955-57 in HM Submarines Seascout and Talent. Manchester branch. June 13. Aged 79.

Frank Deadman AB ST. Served 1943-45 in HM Submarines Sealion, H43, P553, Seawolf and U190. Sussex branch. June 18. Aged 99.

'Dutchy' Holland L/Sea. Served 1957-62 in HM Submarines Tireless and spare crew Portland (S Boats). Norfolk branch. June 19. Aged 78.

Joseph 'Joe' Stockton DSM L/Sea. HTD. Served 1940-47 in HM Submarines Thunderbolt, Sunfish, P41, Tigris, Unbending, Terrapin, Tapir and Lacuna. Leicestershire & Rutland branch. June 20. Aged 95.

Derek Jones PO OEL. Served 1962-70 in HM Submarines Narwhal, Tabard, Taciturn and Tiptoe. Eastern States branch. June 20. Aged 72.

Anthony 'Tony' Parkinson OE Mech1. Served 1971-80 in HM Submarines Onyx and Rorqual. Manchester branch. June 22. Aged 69.

Geoffrey 'Geoff' Jackson L/Sea UC3. Served 1951-57 in HM Submarines Artemis, Solent, Aurochs and Subtle. Leicestershire & Rutland branch. June 30. Aged 83.

Philip Prew Sto.Mech. Served 1952-57 in HM Submarines Sentinel, Teredo, Arcturus and Scotsman. Gatwick branch. July 1. Aged 81.

Mike Allison RO. Served 1963-66 in

Ask Jack

Chris Ball attended HMS Raleigh from Oct 3 1966 and served until 1976. His joining class was made up of different branches (he was comms). Although he has a photo of members of his class he can only remember the names of two ex-shrimps that he is in contact with. If you recall Chris from this class please call him on 07858 762922 or email pembridge@tinyonline.co.uk

Sports Lottery

July 11: £5,000 – LH G Halsall; £1,800 – Surg Lt(D) F Warwick; £800 – Log/CH M Inglebrecht; £600 – AB1 J Pascoe; £500 – AB1 T Elliott; £400 – Lt Cdr R Beadnell.

July 18: £5,000 – LH A Tritschler; £1,800 – PO M Waller; £800 – PO A Gibson; £600 – CPO M Knox; £500 – Cdr J Craig; £400 – LH C Davies.

July 25: £5,000 – PO W Baird; £1,800 – Lt C Harris; £800 – PO D Shayler; £600 – Mine L Griffin; £500 – Sgt T Ormiston; £400 – Sgt P Landamore.

August 1: £5,000 – CPO J Fletcher; £1,800 – WO1 M Billany; £800 – AB1 C Stocker; £600 – Lt D Cullen; £500 – Cdr D Martyn; £400 – WO1 S Tripp.

HM Submarines Excalibur, Ocelot, Osiris and Orpheus. Hull branch. July 6. Aged 72.

Terence Brown PO.RS. Served 1971-79 in HM Submarines Valiant and Scopre. Dolphin branch. July 6. Aged 65.

Terence 'Terry' Spurling CCEMN.

Served 1951-72 in HM Submarines Thermopylae, Turpin, Totem, Sanguine, Tudor, Andrew, Dreadnought and Swiftsure.

Gerry Warne Sto.Mech. Served 1951-52 in HM Submarines Trespasser and Thule. Dolphin branch. July 11. Aged 83.

Garry Winterbottom CCMEA. Served 1975-97 in HM Submarines Spartan (80-83), Turbulent (84-88) and Torbay (92-94).

Bill Lorking Stoker PO. Served 1950-59 in HM Submarines Sturdy, Astute, Alcide,

Artemis, Talent and Explorer. Barrow-in-Furness branch. July 28. Aged 81.

Algerines Association

John Frank 'Jack' Hayward Tel.

Served 1946-47 HMS Wave.

Stanley 'Jumbo' Woolford Sig/TO.

Served 1944-46 HMS Plucky. 2014.

Kenneth G Glazebrook. HMS Recruit.

January 8.

Keith C Butler Tel. Served 1943-45

HMS Friendship. May 22.

Thomas Scott L Stwd. Served 1943-46

HMS Orestes. June 29.

Sub Lt Robert Tait Jackson RNVR.

Served 1943-45 HMS Melita and Pickle.

July 18. Aged 91.

Charles McKenzie L/Sto. Served

1949-52 HMS Chameleon. July 19.

Reunions

October

HMS St Vincent Association: Reunion weekend October 2-5 at Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea. AGM at St Vincent College, Gosport, 1100 on 3rd. Details from 'Scappy' Watson 01329 310078 or IOW Tours 01983 40516.

HMS Sheffield Association reunion and AGM at the Coniston Hotel, Sittingbourne, Kent, October 2-5. Bookings via Isle of Wight Tours on 01983 405116. Chatham Dockyard excursion on Saturday (entry fee for paid-up members will be paid for by the association). Further details on joining the association contact Lt Cdr Charlie Deal secretary@hmssheffieldassociation.com or Mark Snow treasurer@hmssheffieldassociation.com

February 2016

HMS London F95, 90/91 Gulf War crew reunion Feb 27 at the UJC, London. Contact Ian Farmer on Facebook or ijamf@sky.com, 07785 270009.

April 2016

HMS Loch Fada F390 Association and RM detachments reunion and AGM April 8-11. King Charles Hotel, Chatham. AGM Sat at 1030, till 1200. Reunion Dinner 1830 (drinks 1800). Coach outing Sunday to Greenwich or take Walking Bus to Chatham Historic Dockyard. Details and bookings from Isle of Wight Tours on 01983 405116 or F390 Secretary 'Frenchy' on 01252 310767.

HMS Neptune & Kandahar: Service

1200 on Sat October 10 at memorial to the National Memorial Arboretum, Staffs; AGM follows. See www.hmsneptune.com or ring Graham Davies on 07941 440113.

Bay Class Frigates reunion

Mixed fortunes on the track

SENIOR rate CPOMEM(M) Steve Hutchings finished eighth overall at the Armed Forces Race Challenge.

The event, at Cadwell Park in Lincolnshire, saw 14 military and four retired Servicemen take part.

Steve Hutchings and Lt Cdr Richie Scott made up the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Circuit Race Team.

It rained over the weekend and practice was early, damp, but drying. It was a mixed bag, with Steve loving the opportunity to try out his car on the technically-challenging mountain part of the track and floor it down the straights.

But Richie had to retire when his Sultan Locost developed a misfire on lap five.

For the race Steve started 13th and Richie 16th out of 18.

Richie got a good start while two cars bogged down, up to 14th and overtook an Evo through Charlie's. But then the dreaded misfire returned.

Steve had more success, he



● Above, Lt Cdr Richie Scott in his Sultan Locost

Picture: Nick and Mark Rogers

settled down with the challenging track, racing a few cars around him.

As he gained confidence Steve reduced his fastest lap time from qualifying by over five seconds.

On lap seven an RAF Fiesta driver spun off at the hairpin and brushed the tyres. However a guest Porsche driver stayed into his starboard rear quarter and punted him back on to the track.

Yellow flags and safety car, with medical cover, saw a long procession through the pit window.

Steve pitted and taped up his

passenger window before being allowed to rejoin.

Once the safety car pitted Steve was running towards the back and after another few laps Steve began to slow down due to a fuel leak in the car and retired to the pits.

New drivers are wanted for the 2016 season. Details of the series are available online at www.armedforcesracechallenge.net/

There are opportunities to take your race licence with a subsidy from the RN. Contact Lt Cdr Scott at JFC, RAF Waddington via DII for details.

Champions bid to retain Inter-Service title

THE annual Rugby League Inter-Service series kicks off on September 4 with the RAF hosting current champions the Royal Navy at RAF Cranwell.

The second round on September 13 has the RAF taking on the Army in Salford whilst RNRL

host the Army at Burnaby Road in Portsmouth on September 18.

Details on all Inter-Service matches can be found at www.pitchero.com/clubs/royalnavyrugbyleague or by phoning 023 9272 7749.

Rugby Union Referee

Complete the RNRU subsidised Level 2 Refereeing Course and have access to:



- Subsidised Training
- Go At Your Pace
- Keeping Active
- Priority Twickenham Ticket Access
- Expenses Paid

- Personal Development
- Staying Involved
- Fully Supported Progression
- Male & Female Required
- Subsidised Kit

RFU Level 2 Refereeing Courses

9-10 Sept 2015
25-26 Nov 2015

HMS Drake
HMS Temeraire

To attend or for further details contact:
WO1 RN Gaz Fairbairn - rugbytime@hotmail.co.uk
Lt Jane Pizii - jane.pizii249@mod.uk
WO2 RM WO2 Wolfie Power - wolfiepower@hotmail.com



Pictures: L(Phot) Dave Jenkins

World at their feet as big adventure begins



● Anita Lister smashes Champagne over Adventure of Hornet

AND they're off two Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training yachts leave Portsmouth Harbour to circumnavigate the globe.

The 72ft Adventure of Hornet and Discoverer of Hornet left Gosport for Lanzarote, the 1,800-mile first leg of Exercise Transglobe adventure training expedition.

Nick Trundle, who is skippering Adventure, said: "Exercise Transglobe will, in the true spirit of Service Adventurous Training, seriously challenge all those who take part."

"It has been two years in the planning. The two yachts are in excellent shape and I'm confident that the Service personnel who take part will have experiences and leadership challenges that will develop their ability to do their jobs within the military more effectively and also remain with them for a lifetime."

Before they left Gosport both vessels were named by Anita Lister, wife of Vice Admiral Simon Lister, chairman of the Association of Service Yacht Clubs and Admiral of the Royal Naval Sailing Association, and

Sarah-Lucie Bashall, wife of Maj Gen James Bashall, Commodore of the Army Sailing Association.

The previous day the yachts were blessed by the Rev Bernard Clarke.

The two yachts, one manned by Royal Naval and RAF personnel and one by Army soldiers, will sail around the world in 13 legs, with one longer break in Australia to take part in the Sydney to Hobart yacht race in December.

From the tropical waters of the Caribbean to the wilds of the Southern Ocean the Challenger yachts will grace

such spectacular harbour entrances as Rio de Janeiro, Cape Town, Sydney and New York.

By the time the yachts return to Gosport in August 2016, a total of 392 women and men, both reservists and regulars, will have sailed on them.

Adventure was formerly Aviva, sailed by Dee Caffari – the first woman to sail single-handedly and non-stop the 'wrong way' around the world – while Discoverer was used by the Ocean Youth Trust Scotland as a sail training yacht for disadvantaged Scottish children.



● The two yachts moored at Gosport; The vessels are blessed by the Rev Bernard Clarke

Power display

THE Royal Navy Powerlifting Association had five people qualify to compete at the WDFPF World Single Lifts Championships in Telford.

The single lift format allows the athletes to compete in any combination of the three disciplines (squat, bench press and deadlift) as each lift is treated as a separate competition.

First up for the RN was LCH Wes McGuinness (HMS Trenchant) in the 82.5kg category. He managed a whopping 217.5kg setting a new British overall and Military/Police/Fire (MPF) record in the process and placing second in the senior category (first MPF).

POMA Chris Martin (HMS Vigilant) opened with 210kg but could not get either of his attempts at 222.5kg past the referees.

Mne Brad Smith (40 Cdo) opened at 217.5kg and then lifted 230.5kg for a new world record in the Junior and MPF categories, becoming the WDFPF World Squat Champion.

Cpl Jason Thomson representing MDHU Portsmouth got the ball rolling in the bench press 75kg category, with a 157.5kg lift to take second place in the open and MPF categories.

LCH McGuinness secured third place in the senior category with a personal best lift of 155kg.

LPT Andrew Davey (RNAS Culdrose) won the senior category with his opening attempt of 157.5kg while POMA Martin was placed fifth.

Up for the challenge

A TEAM from HMS Raleigh sailed 115 miles, cycled 140 miles and ran 29 miles to take third place in this year's South West Three Peaks' yacht race.

The team was one of six to finish the three-day challenge, which involved sailing from St Mawes to Plymouth in three stages.

Sailing in the Hustler 35 yacht Jemima, the CO of HMS Raleigh, Capt Rob Bellfield and Lt Cdr Al Dawson, formed the crew.

Cpl Andrew Watkinson and Mne Pete Meaney rowed out to Jemima after completing the first running challenge.

Lt Cdr Jake Dray and Surg Lt Cdr Stephen Gokhale cycled to Portcurno and then left their bikes to run along the coastal path to Land's End. The duo also embarked on the final stage; an overnight cycle and run.

Coveted title for Tim Fighting spirit at camp

MORE than 230 people took part in the first Yeovil Marathon at the Royal Naval Air Station.

Organised by POAET Bryn Phillips, of 845 NAS CHF, the marathon was a great success with participants competing not only for a personal best race time but also for the title of the winner.

The coveted title went to Tim Hawkins with a time of 2hr 47m 21s.

He was presented with his medal by Abigail Garrett, a student at Charlton Horethorpe CoFE School, who won the competition to design the medal.

Tim said: "It was great to win. I took the first part of the race a bit too fast and suffered for the last five miles."

"But overall, I held it together well and it's absolutely fantastic to win the first Yeovil Marathon, especially with Yeovil being my home town."

The marathon was held through the Yeovil Town Road Running Club with all money raised going to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and

Navy men rule in the pool

THE Royal Navy men's swimming team took the Inter-Service title for the 16th time in 18 years.

Halfway through the championships, held at HMS Temeraire, the title looked to be going the way of the holders the RAF.

LPT Stu Mantle in the 200m backstroke and Mne Liam Spruce in the 100m breaststroke both achieved second place.

LH Liam Armstrong was third in both the 400m and 800m, while LPT Jordan Bate also achieved third place in the individual medley.

AB Martin Bosson was second in the 100m butterfly, with skipper Rhod Humphreys finishing fifth.

Sub Lt Ewan Simpson was first in the 100m freestyle, with Diver Jeremy Osbourne third.

The 100m backstroke saw Mne Alex Rea finish first with LPT Mantle in third.

Mne Lee Ormerod was fifth in the 200m breast-stroke, with Mne Spruce second.

The 200m freestyle saw AB Bosson finish first and Lt Humphreys fourth.

The final individual event saw Diver Josh Spibey and Diver Osbourne take first and second place respectively in the two-lengths freestyle.

The two relays saw the Navy finish second in the 4x2 and first in the 6x2 to take the

title, with the RAF finishing second and the Army third.

The women's Inter-Services saw the Royal Navy take second spot to the RAF.

AB Sam Eagle and AET Emily Newton were first and fourth in the 400m freestyle.

ABs Becky Johnstone and Rachel Barber finished first and fifth in their event.

AB Eagle won the 100m backstroke with AB Cath Adams in third spot, while AB Johnstone was second and Cpl Caitlin O'Malley fourth in the 100m butterfly.

The freestyle relay saw AB Johnstone, Emma Miles, Barber and Eagle shatter the previous record by more than seven

Life's a beach for RNRU

ROYAL Navy Rugby Union hosted the second rugby beach festival at Weymouth.

Eighteen teams took part on the energy-sapping sand.

Following some creative organisation, all the teams headed into the knockout phases with a Plate and Cup for the winning teams.

The Plate final was contested by Commando Logistics Regt (CLR) and Commando Training Centre RM, leading to the possibility of the Royal Marines having a beach rugby clean sweep.

To CLR the spoils, romping to a five-tries-to-one win.

With the stands brimming with support, the four semi-finalists in the Cup stood primed.

HMS Seahawk, who had beaten HMS Heron in an all-airmen quarter-final, took on a pumped up 30 Cdo 'A' team with the marines winning by the smallest of margins.

The second semi saw HMS Raleigh take on a combined HMS Ocean and 1AGRM side; again the differences between the teams was as thin as a grain of sand with the Kernow team edging the amphibious boys.

The final was between HMS Raleigh and 30 Cdo.

Tries were scored at each end by both sides.

A penalty on 30 Cdo's try line gave the marines the impetus with the clock ticking down for a final push and with the score deadlocked at four apiece; they crossed for a final try to the delight of the crowd.

Super season

TAKING charge of a senior Inter-Service fixture was one of the highlights of the season for the Royal Navy Rugby Union Referee Society.

Cdr Dunx McClement became only the third RN referee to oversee the match – the RAF beat the Army.

The Scottish Premiership referee also acted as assistant referee in both Rabo Pro-12 and European Challenge Cup matches. He was supported by two of the Navy's National AR Panel officials, Surg Lt Steve Wolley (the society's Referee of the Year) and chairman Cdr Andy Coles.

Elsewhere in the Society ex-CPO Paul Burton and retired Cdr Roger Baileff are now veterans of the Premiership touchlines.

The season also saw a number of notable additions, including Sub Lt Simon Priestley, who secured his RNRURS colours for refereeing the Inter-Service women's fixture, and won Newcomer of the Year Award in his first full season.

If you have recently had to give up playing and want to remain involved in the sport contact WO1 Gaz Fairbairn (training officer) or WO1 Geoff Howells (secretary) for more details.

Reign in rain

TEN Royal Navy personnel braved a wet Eton Dorney for the annual women-only triathlon.

The team notched up some great results on what was the largest distance tackled for many of the team.

The team were supported by Royal Navy triathlon head coach WO Steve Fitzjohn and his wife Kristine, who also raced.



● The Royal Navy gliding team, from left, Capt Paul Jessop, Lt Will Ellis, Lt Cdr Chris Bryning and WO Andy Farr

clocked up a good speed. This continued into the third day and the fourth.

"Getting an edge over the opposition was key and I eventually scored 5,067 points overall, beating second place by 250 which in gliding is a substantial margin."

"It's a culmination of over a decade of hard work, learning a complex three-dimensional sport

and a reward for the effort put in. I'm now really looking forward, if invited, to represent Great Britain at World level, where GB is top three of the gliding nations."

Along with two other members of the Royal Navy Gliding Team, WO Andy Farr and Lt Cdr Chris Bryning, they took part in the Inter-Service competition at Bicester Gliding Airfield.

The Navy has won the Inter-Service competition for the last two years but this year finished second to the RAF.

Will won the sport class outright with 4,650 points and with a significant point margin over second place. He was also day winner on four out of the six days that were flown in the sport class, often reaching speeds over 100km/hour.

NAVY Command hosted the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Martial Arts Association Training Camp.

Each of the disciplines involved experienced civilian instructors, Master John Harrison, fifth Dan WTF taekwondo and Sensei Steve Hollister, fifth Dan karate.

The Taekwondo team welcomed a number of new faces, who by the end of the first session were unrecognisable as 'newbies' and were firmly part of the team.

All members were given the opportunity to use the new Protection Scoring System (PSS) which was introduced at the London 2012 Olympic Games, consisting of body armour fitted with electronic body protector sensors that register kicks and punches if applied with sufficient force.

Sensei Hollister was again the choice of squad trainer for the karate team.

One of the most memorable training sessions was an afternoon circuit of exercises making use of Sensei Hollister's bungee cords and weighted gloves.

Vice Chairman of the association Maj Graham Adcock said: "This really shows the RN's ability to generate fighting spirit, this year we have a number of young potentially very good fighters ready for competition."

"The association is moving from strength to strength, especially now with the introduction of grass-roots training at HMNB Portsmouth, and the introduction of karate within Phase Two recreational training at HMS Collingwood."

"Taekwondo again has a very strong squad and kendo is growing within the association and has brought in another dynamic."

Anyone interested in the Martial Arts should visit: http://pdeportal.co.uk/sports/martial_arts or http://www.rmsports.co.uk/sports/martial_arts

Alternatively you can join the RNRMMAA on Facebook to keep up with the latest news.

Or contact AB(Wtr) Nat Parkes at: nparkes87@gmail.com or Tel Mil: 9375 52288.

Sky's the limit for jumping Jack



CPO Sean 'Pat' Garrett takes in the view over Madrid during his adrenalin-fuelled adventurous training. Pat, based in Northwood, explains how he ended up in the air.

I SAT in the usual Monday afternoon commanding officer's meeting with the heads of department and my senses became alive when the CO announced "This summer term I want to promote adventurous training and everyone, work permitting should be spared."

As I heard the distant drone of a plane a little light inside me lit up and the seed was planted, this was my chance to

go sky diving and complete my Accelerated Free Fall course (AFF).

The thought of falling towards the earth from 13,500ft at terminal velocity (125mph approx) certainly ticked all the boxes and represented everything C2 drill stood for; discipline, respect and courage, the ethos of the Royal Navy, and every good sailor.

Leaving the meeting I headed straight to the gym, had a quick discussion with the ever helpful club swingers, and before I knew

it I had funding from welfare. I googled various drop zones within the UK, and a couple in Europe.

The Free Fall University, Madrid, Spain was exactly what I was looking for with a good dose of sun for good measure.

A few emails later a non-refundable deposit handed over and a passionate convincing chat with my gorgeous better half that I was actually going to come back, and I was on a flight to Madrid.

It's safe to say the first night in the shared apartment I didn't really sleep, not knowing what to expect the next day but my boundaries were certainly going to be pushed to the limit and

beyond.

After a day of intense ground school training and information overload the following day I was ready for my big moment.

Even after a few beers another sleepless night occurred but the following morning I couldn't feel more alive.

We arrived at the drop zone (DZ), got kitted up and with two instructors we boarded the plane.

My brain couldn't function, beads of nervous sweat became rivers but nothing could prepare me when the alarm went off and the door was opened at 13,500ft.

My heart pumping, adrenaline flowing through my

veins, I edged towards the door and got into position.

My drills kicked in, check in, check out, focus on the propeller, force every ounce of air out of my body, out, in, out and with a second I was flying at 125mph. Even though the fear controlled me I knew I was hooked.

Feeling I could take on the world I walked in my lines, gathered up my chute, threw up twice, and with a spring in my step I made my way back to the hangar.

I was soon brought back down to earth by my instructor who asked one simple question: "Sean, why didn't you pull your chute at 6,000 ft as briefed?"

Whoops! It suddenly struck me that there was more to sky diving than I thought.

Fourteen jumps later, one malfunction, I have completed my level 1-7 AFF and now I am qualified to jump out of a plane without an instructor.

All that stands between me and my A licence consists of ten consolidation jumps, including one hop-and-pop at 5,000ft.

Now I look forward to Wednesday sports so I can travel down to Netheravon, Salisbury, and the home of the Army Parachuting Association to continue jumping.

The sky's the limit for me now.



● CPO Sean 'Pat' Garrett is pictured behind his instructor Mike Evans before jumping out of the light aircraft over Spain during his sky-diving experience

Pictures: Mike Evans

Sporting reward for crew



SAILORS swapped their Type 23 frigate for kayaks during a four-day adventurous training period.

Following a successful time at Operational Sea Training, the crew of HMS St Albans were given the chance to take part in a variety of sports, including walking, climbing, paddle boarding and trail riding.

The AT time concluded with a mini Olympiad and barbecue.

LPT Amanda Billingham said: "Organising so many events at short notice while at sea has proved difficult but seeing so many of the ship's company partaking in AT has been rewarding."

Picture: Lt Cdr Gordon Whyte

Surf's up for sailors

A SAILOR from RNAS Culdrose helps a young surfer at Fistral Beach, Newquay.

Trainee Naval officers, engineers and airmen from the base volunteered to support The Wave Project's Summer Surf Challenge.

The sailors helped ensure the event went smoothly, supporting people of all ages and with a variety of disabilities both in and out of the water.

The team from Culdrose also helped to run free surfing taster sessions and lessons throughout the day for anyone who wanted to get involved.

Everyone who took part received a medal.

Lt Matt Cooke from 750 NAS said: "We all had a fantastic time and it was really rewarding to be able to help people who may not get the opportunity to go surfing otherwise, it would be great to do it again."



**THE VALUE OF
FORGING A NEW PATH
IN MINE WARFARE.**

At a fraction of the cost of competing platforms, Northrop Grumman's AQS-24 Minehunting Sensor combined with an Unmanned Surface Vessel (USV) is the most capable and affordable minehunting system fielded to date. The AQS-24/USV uses unmanned technology to find and identify potential undersea threats, assuring critical access for our allies at sea. All because we know sometimes the best man for the job—is no man at all. *That's why we're a leader in Unmanned Systems.*

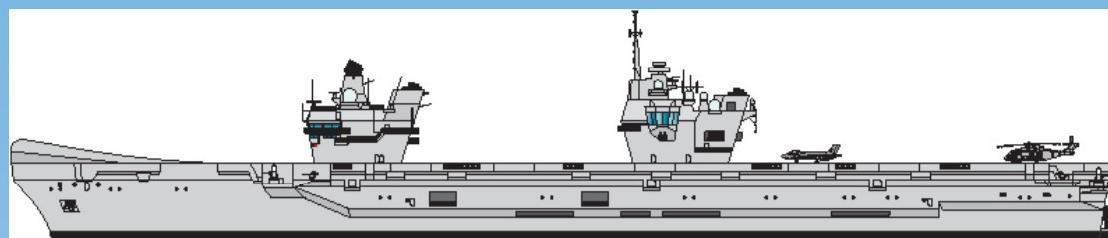
THE VALUE OF PERFORMANCE.

NORTHROP GRUMMAN

www.northropgrumman.com/minehunter



PORTSMOUTH



AIRCRAFT CARRIER

QUEEN ELIZABETH (In build) R08 PRINCE OF WALES (In build) R09
Displacement 65,000 tonnes Length 280.0m Beam 70.0m
Phalanx gun systems, 30mm close-range guns, Tailored Air Group of F-35B fighters and helicopters.



TYPE 45 DESTROYER

DARING	D32	DRAGON	D35
DAUNTLESS	D33	DEFENDER	D36
DIAMOND	D34	DUNCAN	D37

Displacement 7,350 tonnes Length 152.4m Beam 21.2m
4.5" gun, Sea Viper missiles, Harpoon missiles, Phalanx gun systems, 30mm close-range guns, torpedo defence system, Lynx or Merlin helicopter



RIVER CLASS PATROL SHIP

TYNE	P281	MERSEY	P283
SEVERN	P282		

Displacement 1,700 tonnes Length 79.8m Beam 13.6m
20mm close-range gun.



RIVER II CLASS PATROL SHIP

CLYDE	P257		
Displacement 1,865 tonnes	Length 81.5m	Beam 13.6m	
30mm close-range gun.			

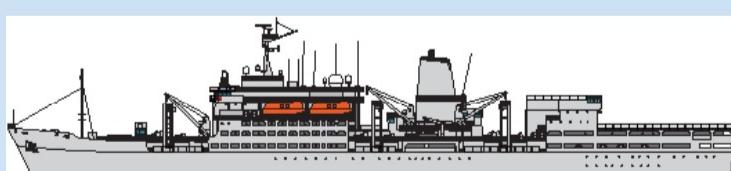
FORTH (In build)	TRENT (Ordered)		
MEDWAY (In build)			

Displacement 2,200 tonnes Length 90.0m Beam 13.5m
30mm close-range gun.



AUXILIARY OILER & REPLENISHMENT SHIP

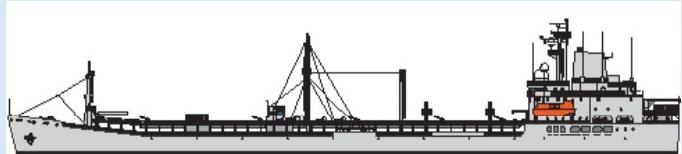
FORT VICTORIA A387
Displacement 35,500 tonnes Length 203.5m Beam 30.4m
Phalanx gun systems, 30mm close-range guns, Merlin or Lynx helicopter.



SOLID SUPPORT SHIP

FORT ROSALIE	A385	FORT AUSTIN	A386
Displacement 23,384 tonnes	Length 185.1m	Beam 24.1m	

Phalanx gun systems, 20mm close-range guns. Merlin or Lynx helicopter.



FLEET SUPPORT TANKER

ORANGELEAF A110
Displacement 37,747 tonnes Length 170.7m Beam 25.9m
20mm close-range guns.



TYPE 23 FRIGATE

KENT	F78	IRON DUKE	F234
ST ALBANS	F83	WESTMINSTER	F237
LANCASTER	F229	RICHMOND	F239

Displacement 4,200 tonnes Length 133.0m Beam 16.1m
4.5" gun, Harpoon missiles, Seawolf missiles, anti-submarine torpedoes, 30mm close-range guns, Lynx or Merlin helicopter.



HUNT CLASS MCMV

LEDBURY	M30	CHIDDINGFOLD	M37
CATTISTOCK	M31	ATHERSTONE	M38
BROCKLESBY	M33	HURWORTH	M39
MIDDLETON	M34	QUORN	M41

Displacement 750 tonnes Length 60.0m Beam 10.0m
30mm close-range gun, remote-control mine disposal system.



ARCHER CLASS PATROL BOAT

EXPRESS	P163	TRACKER	P274
EXPLORER	P164	RAIDER	P275
EXAMPLE	P165	BLAZER	P279
EXPLOIT	P167	PUNCHER	P291
ARCHER	P264	CHARGER	P292
BITER	P270	RANGER	P293
SMILER	P272	TRUMPETER	P294

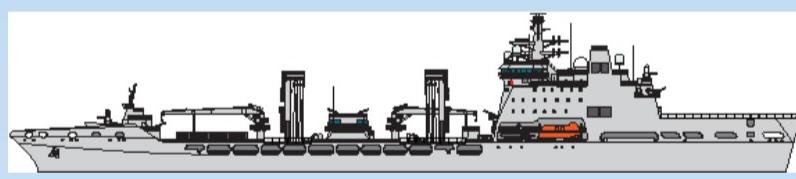
Displacement 54.0 tonnes Length 20.8m Beam 5.8m



SCIMITAR CLASS PATROL BOAT

SCIMITAR	P284	SABRE	P285
Displacement 26.0 tonnes	Length 16.0m	Beam 4.4m	

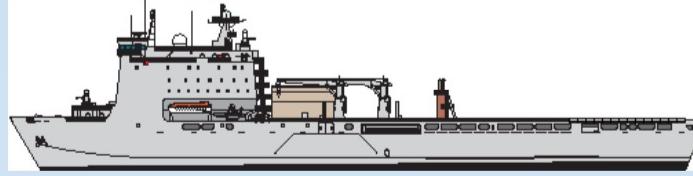
Machine guns.



FLEET TANKER

TIDESPRING (In build)	A136	TIDESURGE (Ordered)	A138
TIDERACE (In build)	A137	TIDEFORCE (Ordered)	A139

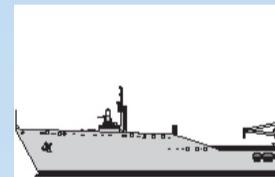
Displacement 37,000 tonnes Length 200.9m Beam 28.6m
Phalanx gun systems, 30mm close-range guns, Lynx or Merlin helicopter.



LANDING SHIP DOCK (AUXILIARY)

LYME BAY	L3007	CARDIGAN BAY	L3009
OUNTS BAY	L3008		

Displacement 16,160 tonnes Length 176.0m Beam 26.4m
Phalanx gun systems, 30mm close-range guns.



FLEET TANKER

WAVE KNIGHT A3
Displacement 31,500 tonnes
Phalanx gun systems, 30mm close-range guns.



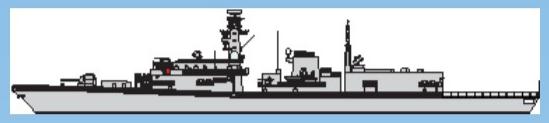
PRIMARY CASUALTY

ARGUS A1
Displacement 26,421 tonnes
30mm close-range guns.



DEVONPORT

OCEAN L12
Displacement 21,758 tonnes Length 203.4m
Phalanx gun systems, close range guns, tailored Air Group of 18 helicopters, landing craft, embarked military force.



TYPE 23 FRIGATE

PORTLAND	F79	MONMOUTH	
SUTHERLAND	F81	MONROSE	
SOMERSET	F82	NORTHUMBERLAND	
ARGYLL	F231		

Displacement 4,200 tonnes Length 133.0m
4.5" gun, Harpoon missiles, Seawolf missiles, anti-submarine torpedoes, 30mm close-range guns, Lynx or Merlin helicopter.



TRAFAVGAR CLASS FLEET SUBMARINES

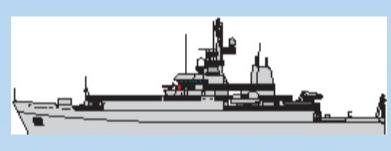
TORBAY	S90	TALENT	
TRENCHANT	S91	TRIUMPH	

Displacement 5,208 tonnes Length 85.4m
Torpedoes, Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles.



OCEAN SURVEY SHIP

SCOTT H131
Displacement 13,500 tonnes Length 131.0m

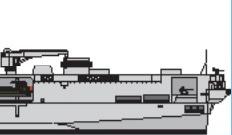
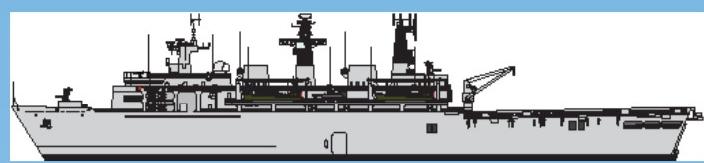


ECHO CLASS SURVEY SHIP

ECHO	H87		
ENTERPRISE	H88		

Displacement 3,470 tonnes Length 90.0m
20mm close-range guns.

ROYAL FLEET AUXILIARY

**SHIP**Beam 34.4m
helicopters,**LANDING PLATFORM DOCK ASSAULT SHIP**

ALBION L14 BULWARK L15
Displacement 18,500 tonnes Length 176.0m Beam 28.9m
Goalkeeper gun systems, close-range guns, landing craft, embarked military force.

**ICE PATROL SHIP**

PROTECTOR A173
Displacement 5,000 tonnes Length 89.7m Beam 18.0m

F235
F236
F238Beam 16.1m
torpedoes, 30mm**COASTAL SURVEY SHIP**

S92
S93
Beam 9.8m

GLEANER H86
Displacement 26.0 tonnes Length 14.8m Beam 4.7m

**LANDING CRAFT**

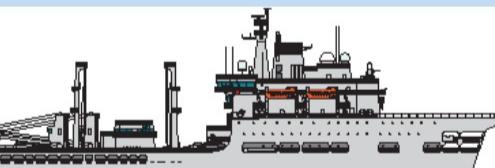
Beam 21.5m

LCU Mk10 10 vessels
Displacement 240 tonnes Length 29.8m Beam 17.4m
Capacity: 1 x 65 tonne Main Battle Tank, 4 x vehicles, or 120 troops

**LANDING CRAFT**

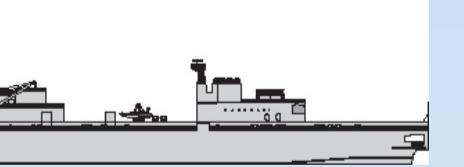
Beam 16.8m

LCVP Mk5 23 vessels
Displacement 8.2 tonnes Length 15.7m Beam 4.3m
Capacity: 6 tonnes of stores, or 35 troops

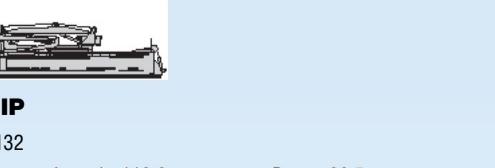


889 WAVE RULER A390
Length 196.0m Beam 27.8m

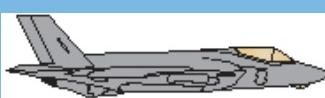
Close-range guns. Merlin or Lynx helicopter.

**RECEIVING SHIP & AVIATION TRAINING**

Length 175.1m Beam 30.4m



Length 112.0m Beam 20.5m

FLEET AIR ARM**F-35B LIGHTNING II**

Length 15.7m
Speed 1,060kts
Weapons 7,000kg of bombs, missiles, 25mm cannon pod.

**LYNX HMA8**

Length 15.2m
Speed 180kts
Weapons Anti-submarine torpedoes, anti-ship missiles, machine guns.

**MERLIN HM2**

Length 22.8m
Speed 167kts
Weapons Anti-submarine torpedoes, machine guns.

**SEA KING ASaC7**

Length 17.5m
Speed 90kts
Weapons AEW radar.

**MERLIN HC3**

Length 22.8m
Speed 167kts
Weapons Machine guns, 24 troops.

**SEA KING HC4**

Length 17.5m
Speed 125kts
Weapons Machine guns, 27 troops.

**WILDCAT HMA2**

Length 15.2m
Speed 157kts
Weapons Anti-submarine torpedoes, anti-ship missiles, machine guns.

**SEA KING HAR5**

Length 17.5m
Speed 125kts

**WILDCAT Mk1**

Length 15.2m
Speed 157kts
Weapons Anti-tank missiles, machine guns, 8 troops.

**HAWK T1**

Length 11.9m
Speed 550kts
Weapons Sidewinder missiles, 30mm cannon pod.

FASLANE**VANGUARD CLASS BALLISTIC MISSILE SUBMARINE**

VANGUARD S28	VENGEANCE S31
VICTORIOUS S29	
VIGILANT S30	

Displacement 15,985 tonnes Length 149.9m Beam 12.8m

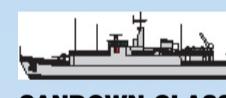
16 x Trident D5 ballistic missiles, torpedoes

**ASTUTE CLASS FLEET SUBMARINE**

ASTUTE S119	ANSON (In build) S123
AMBUSH S120	AGAMEMNON (In build) S124
ARTFUL S121	Boat 7 (Long lead) S125
AUDACIOUS (In build) S122	

Displacement 7,800 tonnes Length 97.0m Beam 11.3m

Torpedoes, Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles.

**SANDOWN CLASS MCMV**

PENZANCE M106	RAMSEY M110
PEMBROKE M107	BLYTH M111
GRIMSBY M108	SHOREHAM M112
BANGOR M109	

Displacement 484.0 tonnes Length 52.5m Beam 10.5m
30mm close-range gun, remote-control mine disposal system.

**ARCHER CLASS PATROL BOAT**

PURSUER P273	DASHER P280
Displacement 54.0 tonnes	Length 20.8m
Machine guns.	Beam 5.8m

**ISLAND CLASS PATROL BOAT**

RONA	MULL
Displacement 19.9 tonnes	Length 14.9m
Machine guns.	Beam 4.1m

**NAVY NEWS**The Royal Navy Fleet 2016 - follow it at www.navynews.co.uk



RIFT

TARGET TAX REFUNDS



If you drive your own vehicle to base and have been posted to different bases (including outside the UK), there's a good chance the taxman owes you a **£2,500** refund. You may also be able to claim for Mess Dress. As the UK's leading tax refund experts,

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Details of the legislation RIFT claim under can be found on www.HMRC.gov.uk under section 336-339 of ITEPA 2003. We operate under this legislation to ensure that no one is exposed or receives a refund they are not entitled to.